

HABITAT CONSERVATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

for the Washington County Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP)

A **regular meeting** of the Habitat Conservation Advisory Committee (HCAC) was held in the Washington City Council Chambers on **October 28, 2014**.

Committee members present were:

Chris Blake, Chairman	Environmental Organization
Larry Crist	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS)
Chris Hart	Local Development
Marc Mortensen	Citizen-at-Large
Bob Sandberg	HCP Administrator

Absent and Excused:

John Bramall, Vice Chairman	Mayors Association
Henry Maddux	Utah Dept. of Natural Resources (UDNR)
Jimmy Tyree	Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

Also present were:

Lacey McIntyre	Washington County HCP – Recorder
Alan Gardner	Washington County Commissioner
Ann McLuckie	Technical Committee (DWR)
Nathan Brown	Technical Committee (FWS)
Tim Croissant	Technical Committee (BLM)
Elaine York	The Nature Conservatory
Dana Meier	UDOT
Jim Raines	Land Development Consultants
Lisa Rutherford	Citizen
Paul Van Dam	Citizen
Wendy Warren	Citizen

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Chris Blake called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m. noting that a quorum was present.

2. **CONSENT AGENDA**

The Consent Agenda is a means of expediting routine matters which come before the committee for approval. The consent portion of the agenda is approved by one (1) non-debatable motion. If any member wishes to remove an item from the consent portion of the agenda, then that item becomes the first order of business on the regular agenda.

- a. **Approval of Agenda**
- b. **Review and Approve Regular Meeting Minutes**
 1. **September 23, 2014**

Approved HCAC Meeting Minutes - October 28, 2014

c. Next Meeting Date
1. November 25,2014

MOTION by Chris Hart to approve the consent agenda.
Seconded by Larry Crist.
Discussion: None.
Vote was taken: All voted aye.
Motion passed.

3. DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

4. PRESENTATIONS

a. None

5. UTILITY AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

a. None

6. GENERAL BUSINESS

a. Consideration of request for endowment funding for White Dome property – Dana Meier and Elaine York

Dana Meier, program engineer for UDOT, requested funding to establish endowment for managing the White Dome property. In 2007 UDOT purchased 140 acres as part of their environmental commitment to mitigate the impacts to the Bear Claw Poppy. Once the property was purchased it was fenced, yet UDOT is not the best entity to manage threatened and endangered species. In speaking with Elaine from The Nature Conservancy they prepared a request for \$80,000 from the HCP to fund the \$100,000 endowment. The other \$20,000 of the endowment will be matched by UDOT for TNC to manage the species on the property.

Elaine York, project director with TNC, discussed how the White Dome property is one of the largest populations of two federally listed species, the Dwarf Bear Poppy and Siler Pincushion Cactus. For the past few years, UDOT has given TNC permission to do some of the ongoing management on the property such as fence repair and contracting a biologist to write a monitoring plan to track the progress of the poppy. The \$100,000 endowment would produce \$4,500 annually for management expenses. Nowhere else in the world does the Dwarf Bear Poppy grow other than Washington County, Utah, and the highest density is on the White Dome property. TNC is eager to take on the management of this area with financial help.

Larry asked if the \$80,000 covers any research. Elaine answered it covers fence repair,

research and monitoring, and management time. Larry questioned the amount available for other species in the budget. Bob answered the HCP has spent 1.3 million for other species during the life of the HCP with a total budget of 1.95 million. For 2014, there is \$50,000 budgeted and just over \$5000 of that has been allocated toward the other species category. Chris Blake suggested allocating \$40,000 out of the 2014 budget and \$40,000 out of the 2015 budget. Chris Hart expressed concern depleting the budget for this request, though he agrees it falls under the other species portion of the budget. There was discussion by the committee about when to spend the money and how much to spend. They agreed to fund this project if UDOT can do a 75/25 split. Dana said getting UDOT to up their portion to 25% would not be a problem.

MOTION by Larry Crist that the committee allocates \$40,000 this year and the remainder of funding, \$35,000, in early 2015 for endowment funding for the White Dome property.

Seconded by Chris Hart.

Discussion: None.

Vote was taken: All voted aye.

Motion passed.

b. Land Acquisition update (Bob Sandberg)

Bob updated the committee on the Section 6 funding. There were two bids for property from SITLA and Virgin River Land Preservation Association. Bob talked with Greg Hansen, DWR, and they have everything in place on the SITLA property. The Virgin River Land Preservation Association has just turned in the draft appraisal and Greg feels it should move forward quickly after review. On potential exchange parcels, the cultural fieldwork has been completed. Bob is waiting on the report and working with BYU to see if an additional parcel in Leeds area can be added to the acreage opted for exchange.

c. Technical Committee Report (Nathan Brown)

Nathan updated the committee on the previous Technical Committee meeting. First, Ann is working as the lead on three habitat restoration projects. Secondly, the Snow Canyon road expansion and Snow Canyon lower galoot restroom facility updates were discussed, and the TC is scheduled to visit SCSP during the next meeting to assess those areas. Finally, there is a berm in the reserve behind Eagle Rock subdivision that was damaged in the recent floods. The TC voted to have Ivins City, in the inactive season, fix the berm as well as extend it to the paved road.

d. HCP Administrator's report (Bob Sandberg)

1. New map

Bob Sandberg reported on the completion of the new visitor's map for the reserve. He expressed his thanks to Cameron Rognan for his hard work in preparing and printing the map. The higher quality, water and tear resistant map is for sale for \$5.00. The map will also be available on the website. Marc Mortensen requested to keep the map price to a minimum but believes it is well done. Bob mentioned the HCP department considered making the map free, however, they felt people may respect it more if they invest a small amount into it.

2. Submission of 3rd quarter report

Bob submitted the 3rd quarter report. He requested the committee review the report for changes or approval to be discussed at the next meeting in November. Along with the quarterly report, he presented the budget summary report to recap revenues and expenses.

3. Flooding repair efforts

Bob reported that the HCP staff has been out with prison crews helping repair reserve fencing. There has been a lot of progress made on fence repair and tortoise recovery. It is an ongoing process.

4. Assistance provided

HCP assisted DWR and UDOT to complete the clearance at the Southern Corridor. They anticipate starting work at the end of December and will finish in about a year. HCP staff has also worked with Washington City and St. George City on waterline breaks and utility annual maintenance and inspections.

5. Plan and process for completing permit renewal

The county has met with Mark Capone who was funded through FWS and DWR to assist with the permit renewal process. He has put together an outline of the permit renewal process. Chris Hart questioned when the HCAC will see the outline. Bob answered as soon as the county and Mark get things worked out, which may not be until the January meeting, the outline will be brought before the committee. Larry Crist mentioned that he would talk with Mark and try to get something for the HCAC by the November meeting.

7. PUBLIC COMMENT

This item is reserved for items not listed on this agenda. No action may be taken on a matter raised under this agenda item (three minutes per person).

Lisa Rutherford questioned the status of the wall mural project for the Red Cliffs Desert Reserve Visitor Center. Bob answered there has not been a lot of time to focus on this, but he will put it on the agenda for next month. He has not finished the research he needs to in order to make any decisions, but he recognizes the importance.

Wendy Warren, a citizen living in Green Springs, expressed concern regarding the possibility of Washington City placing a high voltage power line behind their home, near the edge of the reserve. She was curious what the HCAC does, and if they have a say in that issue. Chris Blake answered that the HCAC has no jurisdiction over Washington City and suggested she visit Washington City. Larry Crist mentioned the HCP was established as mitigation to offset development in Washington County. It is primarily focused on preserving habitat for the desert tortoise. When it was established there were certain existing uses that were preserved, and the idea was to allow those to continue but to minimize future impacts associated with those uses. There is no anticipation for large scale developments in the Reserve. Wendy wanted to come before the committee and learn more about what they do.

Jim Raines, Brennan Holdings, wanted to thank everyone for their efforts. In the exchange Bob Brennan has proposed a significant donation of his land for federal lands. The process to be entered into early next year is resource management plan amendment by the BLM, and that process will generate quite a bit of public involvement. Jim stressed the importance of the HCAC, TC, and Washington County to be active participants and support this initiative.

8. MEMBER REPORTS & REQUEST FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

a. None

9. ADJOURN

MOTION by Marc Mortensen to adjourn the meeting.
Seconded by Chris Hart.
Discussion: None.
Vote was taken: All voted aye.
Motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 p.m.
Minutes prepared by Lacey McIntyre.