

**HABITAT CONSERVATION TECHNICAL COMMITTEE**  
for the Washington County Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP)

A regular meeting of the Habitat Conservation Technical Committee (TC) was held in the conference room of the Washington County Administration Building, **February 12, 2015.**

Members present were:

Nathan Brown, Chairman	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
Kristen Comella, Vice Chairman	Snow Canyon State Park (SCSP)
Ann McLuckie	Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR)
Cameron Rognan	Washington County HCP
Tim Croissant	Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

Absent and Excused was:

Marshall Topham	Local Biologist
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Also present were:

Bob Sandberg	Washington County HCP Administrator
Lacey McIntyre	Washington County HCP Recorder

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Nathan Brown noted a quorum existed and called the meeting to order at 11:15 a.m.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**a. January 8, 2015**

**Page 3, paragraph 2, sentence 3: added,**

“Ivins city will be repairing that structure.”

**Page 3, paragraph 2, sentence 4: changed,**

From: “Dennis is going to pursue extending ~~that berm~~ between himself, the city, and his HOA.”

To: “Dennis is going to pursue extending the water barrier on his wall between himself, the city, and his HOA.”

**Page 3, Motion, sentence 1: deleted,**

From: “Motion by Kristen Comella that the TC does not support installation of the drainage ditch ~~at this time~~ due to potential permanent loss of habitat.”

To: “Motion by Kristen Comella that the TC does not support installation of the drainage

ditch due to potential permanent loss of habitat.”

**Page 3, Paragraph 3, sentence 5: added,**

From: “Due to his efforts, there will be removal in the Tuacahn detention basin starting within the next week.”

To: “Due to his efforts, there will be sediment removal in the Tuacahn detention basin starting within the next week.”

**MOTION** by Kristen Comella to approve the minutes as amended.

Seconded by Cameron Rognan.

Discussion: None.

Vote was taken: All voted aye.

Motion passed.

**3. GENERAL BUSINESS**

**a. Discussion of field trip to proposed trail at Pioneer Park**

The committee members met with Mark Goble of St. George City at the Pioneer Park Trailhead adjacent to the new Desert Garden facilities in St. George to assess a proposed trail at Pioneer Park. The trail would have two connections to the Red Hills Desert Garden. It would extend from the Garden northwest to an existing waterline access road. Then, it would head northeast and connect eastward to the slick rock section of the trail ending at a southern overlook.

**MOTION** by Cameron Rognan to approve the amended map, exhibit 3-a-1, outlining new trail plans with the following provisions:

1. Keep the Overlook trail as far west as possible, to keep people away from sensitive desert tortoise habitat (referred to as the “bowl”).
2. Reduce multiple trails to the Overlook to a single entrance to reduce trail redundancy and impacts on tortoise habitat.
3. At the BLM boundary the City and/or BLM should consider placing “No Hiking Beyond This Point” or similarly worded signs to direct the public away from the “bowl” and sensitive tortoise habitat.
4. Place secured markers on the slickrock portion of trail to help guide visitors up and down the slickrock.

In addition, the TC discussed placing educational kiosks (to be funded by the HCP and other partners) at the entrance of NCA/Reserve to help educate the public about endemic plants and protected animals (e.g., tortoise, Gila monsters, etc.).

Seconded by Ann McLuckie.

Discussion: None.

Vote was taken: All voted aye.

Motion passed.

**b. Discussion of the SUU human impact monitoring report & future projects**

Briget Eastep presented a report at the January 27<sup>th</sup> HCAC meeting regarding a human impact monitoring project that SUU completed in the Snow Canyon and Paradise Canyon areas of the Reserve. Cameron mentioned the group will be back again to do a project in the spring and wanted input from TC members as to where and what type of project would best utilize the group. The committee decided to think about project possibilities and discuss it further at the next TC meeting in March.

Cameron also mentioned a project that will happen next week at Halfway Wash in Paradise Canyon. The Paradise Canyon HOA asked the BLM if there was anything they could do to help the trails. BLM then asked the HCP staff to flag the approved trail so the Paradise Canyon group can go out and obliterate illegal trails. The HCP staff will flag the trail next week so the volunteer group can work on the trail. After the work is completed BLM is going to put new signs up to make the approved route clear.

**c. Elect new committee members to chair and vice chair positions**

February is the time to elect TC members to the chair and vice chair positions. The committee elected Kristen Comella as the Chairman and Cameron Rognan as Vice Chair. Kristen agreed to serve as Chair but mentioned she may not be able to attend many of the HCAC meetings to give the TC reports. Cameron offered to cover for her when she was unable to attend the HCAC meetings.

**MOTION** by Tim Croissant to nominate Kristen Comella as Chairman and Cameron Rognan as Vice Chairman of the TC effective in March 2015.

Seconded by Nathan Brown.

Discussion: None.

Vote was taken: All voted aye.

Motion passed.

**4. OTHER REPORTS FROM TC MEMBERS AND REQUESTS FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

**a.** Cameron questioned Tim on what areas he treated for fire season to see if there will be a need for goat treatment this year. Tim answered within the past two years he has treated everything within the fence he could get to with a UTV along Cottonwood Road. If Tim has already treated most of the area, the goats would not be worth bringing in for fire prevention. Bob Sandberg mentioned that it would be a good idea, in order to gauge the effectiveness of the spray treatment Tim used, to not use goats this year where Tim has sprayed. Kristen suggested Tim make a map of what was treated as well as what pockets remain untreated for the TC to assess in March. They would like to discuss further if it would be worth bringing in a small group of goats

for fire prevention within the untreated areas. Weed whackers were also discussed as a possible treatment for small areas that were not previously treated.

**b.** Nathan asked Bob if the Education and Outreach Coordinator for the HCP could add a brochure or handout about plants to the education programs that are presented to local schools. Bob said it would be fine and suggested Nathan send the information to the HCP staff in order to incorporate plant life into the outreach program.

**c.** Cameron mentioned a group contacted he and Bob about a community hike at Owen's Loop. They have reservations to start at Pioneer Park. Cameron wondered how big of a group is too big to hike Owen's Loop. This group is supporting mental illness, not holding a competitive event so their group outing would be allowed as far as the HCP is concerned. Nathan said, since some of the land is on BLM, they will have to speak with BLM about a permit. Cameron will send them to the BLM for a proper permit.

**d.** Ann updated the committee about habitat restoration projects in burned areas within two National Conservation Areas in Southwestern Utah. She went in front of the Watershed Restoration Initiative (WRI) council to request \$30,000 to fund the rest of the first year portion of this two-year project. All the funding has been obtained except the \$30,000 from WRI. She will know the result of her funding request soon. She handed out Exhibit 4-d-1 explaining the project goals, methods, future management, monitoring, and a projected timeline and cost. If she does not obtain WRI funds she will pursue the \$30,000 portion from the Endangered Species Mitigation Fund (ESMF).

**e.** Tim updated the committee about BLM personnel issues. Jimmy Tyree is leaving to join the Forest Service in Oregon. There is also a new district manager, Heather Whitman. Juan Palma, BLM State Director, retired and there is no update about his replacement.

## **5. NEXT MEETING DATES**

**a. March 12, 2015**

## **6. ADJOURN**

**MOTION** by Nathan Brown to adjourn.

**Seconded** by Ann McLuckie.

**Discussion:** None.

**Vote was taken:** All voted aye.

**Motion passed.**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:25 p.m.  
Minutes prepared by Lacey McIntyre.