

MINUTES

Emery County Public Lands Council

August 6, 2019

Emery County Courthouse
Canyon Conference Room

PLC: Rod Player, Kim McFarlane, JR Nelson, Ed Geary, Bruce Wilson, Les Wilberg, Leon McElprang, Randal Stilson, Lauren Huntsman.

PL Staff: Ray Petersen, Commissioner Lynn Sitterud, Commissioner Kent Wilson, Commissioner Gil Conover, Deputy Clerk/Auditor Carol Cox.

Public: Larry Johansen, State Parks, Jaydon Mead, BLM, Chris Wood, DWR, Nate Roberts, UDAF/GIP, James Wells, State Parks, Doris Quinn, UTV Utah, Darren Olsen, USFS, Braden Sheppard, BLM, Mark H Williams, Trails.

Excused: Sherrel Ward,

- 1. Welcome:** Rod Player welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- 2. Approval of Minutes:** Motion to approve the minutes of the July 2, 2019 meeting was made by Board member JR Nelson, seconded by Board member Les Wilberg, and the motion passed.
- 3. Chairman Comments:** Rod Player reported on attending the National Governor's Association annual meeting in Salt Lake City where they discussed creating an outdoor recreation learning network. Utah was the first state to create an outdoor recreation advisory network for the governor and now other states are proposing to do the same.
- 4. Chris Conrad-BLM, Braden Shepherd- PLPCO: Legislation Implementation Report.** Chris Conrad-BLM and Braden Shepherd-PLPCO provided a presentation on implementation of Public Law 116-9, The Dingell Jr, Act. Emery County Public Lands legislation was in a bundle of legislation that was passed earlier this year. The act mandates the BLM to meet deadlines for implementation within 180 days to five years. They are currently working on developing a map to guide implementation of the Dingell, Jr. Act. The State of Utah has accepted BLM's offer of conveyance. BLM will work with the State of Utah to identify the next steps in the conveyance, while developing an MOU identifying interim management roles and responsibilities until BLM completes conveyance. Establishing RAC: BLM Utah is working closely with the Washington Office to establish the RAC under the 180 day deadline in the ACT. Non-motorized Trail Inventory: BLM will seek advice from the RAC, once established, to guide this inventory process. Price BLM office staff has had to shift workloads to meet the deadlines included with

the act. Sign inventory: The Price Filed Office would like to work with interested stakeholders to identify key dates to complete sign inventory and begin to sign recreation and new Wilderness Area adjacent to the swell. They are also working on Grazing inventories, wilderness plans, Green River Wild and Scenic River Comprehensive Management Plan, Jurassic national Park, Land Conveyances and Exchanges. Other parts of the act include land designations to include 17 wilderness areas, Jurassic National Monument, San Rafael Recreational Area, McCoy Flats Trail System, Green River Wild and Scenic River, and the John Wesley Powell NCA, as well as a study of non-motorized recreation in the San Rafael Swell RA.

5. Agency Reported and Council member Comments

Bureau of Land Management (BLM):

Chris Conrad reported that BLM continues to work on coal projects. They are piecing together details for Williams Draw EA, also Lila Canyon, and Bronco Mine. They are working with Ferron City on the RMPP for the Ferron Golf Course. They have a company who has submitted request for a permit for a helium well. Good Water Rim, BLM is still working with Fish and Wildlife to get this permit completed.

Division of Water Rights (DWRi)

Division of Oil, Gas and Mining (DOG M)

Division of Wildlife Resources (DWR)

Chris Wood reported that they have a RAC meeting this week. They have just appointed Brad Richman from Ferron to this board representing the non-consumptive seat. Of the fifteen RAC board members Emery County has seven members representing EC, Commissioner Sitterud, Darren Olsen, Kirk Player, Eric Luke, Jace Guymon, Kent Johnson, Brad Richman. Keven Albrect is also a board member. They are implementing something new. They are posting a youtube video of the presentations from RAC meeting that the public can make comment from. They just finished up Elk Classification on the Manti/Skyline. He counted 321 elk. They have finished up Duck Fork Cut throat spawn. Scofield and Electric Lake are next week. Saturday, August 10th in Green River, they will hold a Women's Firearm Clinic. He talked about the Bobcat/ Cougar proposed permits.

School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration (SITLA)

Brian Torgersen reported that they have issued an easement to Emery TelCom for fiber optics. They propose to sell a parcel of land in Emery County. About a year ago they issued a lease west of Huntington for a solar facility. The solar facility got a purchase agreement worked out with RMP. They also received application for a solar/data center east of Castle Dale. This is for one section of land and will be used for saving data for companies. The solar at the base of Cedar Mountain has not had any movement and is categorized as speculative at this time. The earlier

presentation by BLM stated that grazing permits were ten years, they are actually fifteen years. Kim McFarlane asked about the possibility of a BLM/SITLA land exchange in Green River. Brian indicated that the process is to get a letter of request to them as early as possible so they can evaluate the merit to see if it is a high priority for them. Their main objective is to acquire oil and gas. Kim indicated that his would be for commercial development.

Manti-LaSal National Forest (MLNF)

Darren Olsen District Ranger, reported on Canyon Timber Sales, the Black Canyon Timber sale they hope to have advertised by the end of this week. The forest is really green, but they have had a number of lightning strikes. They typically get a few fire starts from these lightning strikes. Many go without notice. The Mammoth Fire near Huntington Reservoir began on July 24th. They took advantage of a hot shot crew to assist with maintenance of this fire. They have a new Forest Planner, Kyle Beagley. He will be stationed at the Ephriam office. The Emergency Watershed Protection Project in Joe's Valley is moving forward through NRCS and Emery County. The Trail Mountain Emergency Watershed Protection Project is moving forward also. Kim McFarlane commented that over the last twenty years as he has visited the forest he has seen a lot of beetle kill. He asked Darren 'what percentage of the forest do you consider as healthy now?' Darren explained that they estimate that they have lost 90% to 95% of the Engleman Spruce as a result of the beetle outbreak that occurred around 1998/1999/2000. This is a big emphasis of this Canyons Project to get the wood off the mountain and get new trees and vegetation on the hills. Kim indicated he would be interested in seeing maps showing the percentage of healthy forest, percentage of beetle kill, or what percent has been burned. Darren stated he thinks that a lot of things set us up for that. There was the Smoky Bear campaign, put all fires out. A lot of the forest did not see logging for many years. There was a lot of older growth and mature forest. Eventually something was going to happen. We either manage it or have some type of activity on the forest such as logging. We are experiencing that now. There is not one tool that is the answer. Logging is not all of it. There is only so much that can be done. Randall asked if they could consider selling commercial wood permits?

Utah State Parks and Recreation

Jim Wells, new Manager for Goblin Valley State Park indicated that they are in their slow season now. They will have their first meeting with BLM for the MOU in two days. Military Day is coming up at all parks. Military will have free entry into the park. Goblin Valley will be moving to a two day pass. Erin Farmer, Manager at Green River State Park could not be here today, but will be helping with the BLM meeting.

Utah State Department of Agriculture

Nate Roberts is still taking range improvements requests until the end of the year. USDA will be helping with the Central Utah Grazing Expo that will be held in Richfield /Ephriam on September 17th in Ephriam and 17th in Richfield.

Washington Delegation Staff

Kelsey Berg, Deputy Chief of Staff for Senator Romney reported that July was a quiet month in the Legislation. The Senate has confirmed 144 judges on different levels. Some of this is changing the Judicial system across the country. Which is good. Especially with lawsuits on Public Lands. They passed a budget bill which will raise the budget cap for the next two years. This should give us time to get a plan in place to at least get the federal deficit under control or at least on a trajectory to be under control. In 2017 they passed a fire fix for appropriations to fire to make Forest Service whole for management of fires.

Commissioner Wilson reported that the Commissioners are moving forward with selecting a consultant to help with Public Land issues in Washington D.C. It is on the agenda for today's Commission Meeting Agenda.

7. Additional Issues from Council members

Rod reported that the reservoirs are full except for lower Huntington. They are keeping the run off from the silt from the fire from entering the lake.

8. Concerned Citizens with Emery County related issues.

Julie Johansen asked what has happened to all the boulderers? Rod reported that they leave when it is warm weather. Ray indicated that as soon as it cools off and the bugs are gone they will return.

9. Adjourn