

**MINUTES**  
**Emery County Public Lands Council**  
**November 03, 2020**

**PLC:** Rod Player, Ed Geary, Leon McElprang, Wade Allinson

**PL STAFF:** Commissioner Kent Wilson, Jim Jennings, Maegan Crosland, Commissioner Gil Conover, Commissioner Lynn Sitterud, Ray Petersen

**Visitors:** Larry Johansen (State Parks), Darrin Olsen (MLNF), Clay Crozier, Michael Ralphs

**Electronically:** Kim McFarlane (PLC), Chris Wood (DWR), Julie Johansen, Dana Dean (DOGM), Ryan (SITLA), Jim (State Parks), JR Nelson, Dana (BLM), Sherrel Ward, JR Nelson, Ben Grimes. Larry Ellertson

**1. Welcome**

**2. Approval of Minutes**

Motion by Ed Geary. Seconded by Les Wilberg. Approved.

**3. Chairman Comments**

Great American Outdoors Act, New Board Members will be appointed, Mike Ralphs met with Darrin Olsen and Kyle Beagly about the grazing portion of the Forest Plan. Mike reports that the meeting went really well. They discussed many of the range and livestock management concerns. Darrin volunteered to bring the range staff together later this afternoon so they can further discuss these concerns. Leon McElprang wanted to clarify that we have many years worth of meetings and time into this issue. Rod asked for follow up on the December 8 Meeting. If we hold the meeting this afternoon with the range crew, do we still need to hold the Dec 8 Meeting? The Board determined that we do not need to hold the meeting next Tuesday.

**4. Commission Report on Emery Land Bill**

Commissioner Wilson states there is not a lot to report on the Lands Bill today. There are a couple of meetings set up for the San Rafael Advisory Board. The Board is meeting in February and April 2021. Commissioner Wilson, Les and Myron went down to the Copper Globe area for a field trip. There are no roads or trails closed. Everything looks the same and is usable the same today as it was 30 years ago. Everything seems to be going as planned. BLM deserves some praise in managing that area. There is new signage out there that is consistent with the public lands bill. In regards to the Longstreet issues, Emery County is working on this, but there is not a lot to report yet. This is an ongoing issue that is in progress.

## **5. Agency Reports and Council Member Comments**

- **Bureau of Land Management (BLM)**

BLM reports that in follow up on the wild horse issues discussed in the last meeting. It has been a law enforcement issue. BLM is working with ECSO to remedy this issue. The Price Office is happy to have productive conversations and meet in the field regarding any issues that come up. The San Rafael Resource Advisory Committee is scheduled for February at this point, but has not made it through the Federal Register process. Seasonal employees are working on installing amenities in campgrounds and heavily used areas. They are working on other high priority projects and still working on Lila Canyon Coal leases, Twin Bridges and Chalk Hills. They have received application regarding Longstreet, but there is not an exact status of the environmental assessment yet. Commissioner Wilson mentioned that after talking with Sheriff Greg Funk ECSO feels that their hands are tied on what they can enforce. He said that BLM has some laws that Emery County does not have, but would love to be able to adopt. It is recommended that we speak with Cam Stevens regarding these laws and policies. Carl Hildabrand would also be a great person to speak with regarding this. Loran Huntsman mentioned that they have been working for a few years to try and acquire some land out near the Hunter Plant. He is wondering if there are any updates on this process? Chris Conrad states they have sent a plan to their solicitors regarding this. Loran mentioned this is the second time they have had to go through this process. It is costing a lot of money, and they have had to start over again and are repeating the same process they completed the first time. Les Wilberg mentioned that out near Ghost Rock and some of the slick rock areas are getting a lot more graffiti. He is wondering if and how this can be removed or repaired. This generally has to be done by professionals and depends on the locations, what was used and what surfaces or type of rock it is on. When you see the graffiti please report it to the BLM. Les would like to invite BLM on the next field trip so they can go out and see the graffiti that is out there. Les also states there were over 30 head of wild horses out in Link Flat. The Permit holder of that area has not had cattle out there for nearly 6 years because there is no feed due to the number of wild horses. In the same area, Les found two drainage ponds with dams that have filled in with sediment. He felt like if those drainage ponds were cleaned out they would be very beneficial to the cattleman. Leon mentioned that he has spoken with BLM Law Enforcement out on the range and they feel like their hands are tied when it comes to enforcement as well. He feels that the horse management plan is not being followed. BLM suggests having a meeting to further discuss the law enforcement regulations and how we can best implement them.

- **Division of Water Rights (DWRi)**

Nobody in attendance.

- **Division of Oil, Gas and Mining (DOGGM)**

DOGGM gave an update on the Buckmaster Abandoned Mine Project. This is phase one of a two phase approach. Phase one started about three weeks ago and includes about 45 openings to mine sights. These are not full reclamations, they are closures of mine openings only. They

have also done some maintenance work out at Temple Mountain. There were about 11 sights that needed some work done out there. There is quite a bit of uranium mine activity going on right now. DOE has been asked to inventory all uranium mines, there have been about 4000 across the country, and 1000 of those are in Utah.

- **Division of Wildlife Resources (DWR)**

Chris Wood mentioned several of the lakes along Skyline Drive are frozen and fishable. RAC meeting is December 9th and the topic is black bears. Biologists are working on big horn sheep flights. Bison update: so far up to date they have sold 233 otc permits. 68 recorded harvests so far. 58 have been in Range Creek, with very little in Desolation. 60% of harvest have been bulls. Nov 19 there was a flight over the area, during this flight there were no bison seen on unit.

- **School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration (SITLA).**

Regarding the Land Exchange they are working on finishing the UTTR Exchange, which should be done by the end of the year, at that point they will move to the Dingel Act Exchange. Their public auction was held online this year. There were no parcels in the South Eastern Utah area. The auction worked well being held online, they may continue to hold auctions online. GR Industrial Lease expires at the end of the year. They have received a new solar lease application for the Hiawatha Solar Project for a 1500 acre project. Nielsen Construction has petitioned for a gravel permit up Huntington Canyon, 3 miles west of Huntington.

- **Manti-LaSal National Forest (MLNF)**

Darrin Olsen states that due to lack of snow logging continues. There is a Forest Plan meeting this Thursday regarding watershed management. This will be the last meeting. There is another meeting later this afternoon regarding grazing and range management in the Forest plan. They have been burning piles near Miller's Flat and over towards Ephraim on the Sanpete side. Christmas Trees permits are still for sale in Huntington, Ferron and online. The money from the Great American Outdoor Act is not available yet, but they are making plans for 2021 to utilize these funds. Les commented telling Darrin thank you for working with Mark Chamberlain on the project they just finished. He thinks it will be beneficial to the cattleman as well.

- **Utah State Parks and Recreation**

Larry Johansen presented stating Millsite is winterized for the season, camp sites still have power and are usable. Huntington is still open and bathrooms are open with running water as well. Scofield is about 90% frozen, but not quite ready for fishing. The snow cat is on the mountain waiting for snow.

- **Utah State Department of Agriculture**

No one in attendance.

- **Washington Delegation Staff**

Clay Crozier mentioned that a third COVID Relief bill was presented recently. This is a \$908 billion emergency relief bill would give more money to PPP, schools, hospitals, state and local government. There was \$500 billion unused in the first round of CARES money that will be part of this \$908 billion.

Larry mentioned that the Congressman recognizes that we need to make the technology in regards to wind energy, available to other countries. Also states that the Congressman recognizes the importance that GIS has become in our lives.

## **6. Additional Issues From Council Member**

Les Wilberg mentioned that at 6:30 am Randall Stilson called and said he can no longer be on the board due to health reasons. We will need to advertise for someone to fill his term.

Commissioner Wilson mentioned that we once discussed offering rewards for leads or information on the vandalism done on the Behind the Reef Trail. Wade would like to consider offering a \$1000 reward which can be comprised of smaller donations from various organizations.

## **7. Concerned Citizens with Emery County related issues.**

## **8. Adjourn**