

MINUTES
Emery County
Public Lands Council
December 6, 2022

PLC: Rod Player, Sherrel Ward, Ed Geary, Ray Petersen, Leon McElprang, Wade Allinson

PL STAFF: Jim Jennings (ECPL), Jan Olsen (executive assistant)

Visitors: Commissioner Kent Wilson, Commissioner Lynn Sitterud, Commissioner Gil Conover, James Wells (State Parks), Jordan Leonard (USU), Kyle Beagley (BLM), Scott Wheeler (State Parks), Chris Wood (UDWR), Dal Gray (DOGM), Chris Nelson (State Parks)

Electronically: Kim McFarlane

1. Welcome, By Chairman Rod Player

2. Approval of Minutes for November 1, 2022.

As presented, Sherell Ward motioned to approve the November 1 meeting minutes, and Ed Geary seconded the motion.

3. Chairman Comments

a. 2023 Meeting Schedule

This was discussed and agreed upon, except for the July 4th meeting will be held on the 11th of July. Ray Petersen motion to approve the meeting schedule with the change made on July 11 was seconded by Leon McElprang.

b. The field trip date

It was discussed and determined that July 11, 2023, would be the day for our field trip.

c. Board Member Vacancies

Rod Player announced that Ed Geary would be resigning, and they are so grateful for his time and service on the board for many years, and Lauren Huntsman is also resigning. We have four vacancies open, and we only have received two applications, so we will need to advertise for those positions.

The mission statement for Emery County Public Lands Council says in part that its intent and purpose is to aggressively preserve the community heritage of Emery County by vigorously participating in and influencing all public land planning and decision-making processes.

This idea became a topic for discussion when Chairman Player asked the Commissioners for comments to start the Emery County Lands Meeting on Tuesday, December 6, 2022. Commissioner Wilson spoke, stating that the commission had received some emails from permit-tees regarding the non-motorized trails outside the designated recreation areas on the Swell, i.e., Little Cedar Mountain. He added the BLM now has a scoping document posted for review and comments on their website until January 2. The Public Lands Council will comment to the BLM following a subcommittee report from council member Leon McElprang who will contact concerned citizens. The comments from the council included following the General Plan of the county, which also calls for the historical preservation of areas in the county. Kyle Beagley, Field Manager from the Price BLM office, also spoke about the scoping document and encouraged comments from interested individuals. The council requested a 30 days extension to further study the options before submitting an official comment from the council.

4. Commission Report on Emery Land Bill

Commissioner Wilson continued to speak to the Public Lands board about budget changes concerning the TRT funds in the county. He stated that 50% would go to the county to be used to assist the county in the maintenance of the increased tourism in the county. A law enforcement officer will be hired for the desert, an employee from Green river will also be employed to grade the roads in the desert, and some funds will go to the maintenance of the Aqua Center. He assured me that this would maintain the Tourism budget. Most of the remaining funds will help promote tourism in Green River because that is where the funds come from.

Commissioner Sitterud commented that tourism is great for Green River, but western Emery County needs to promote industry; Commissioner Conover nodded in agreement.

Wilson then answered a question from a board member about the PacifiCorp Judgement tax levy the county was facing. He answered that with negotiations, the fees were reduced, and the county paid the fees in cash.

Another question from the board was about the public access at the northern end of Long Street in Green River. He responded that the County Attorney was working on this problem but that continued access to public roads was essential to all of them.

5. Agency Reports and Council Member Comments

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

Kyle Beagley reported that as of January 1, 2023, Dana Truman would be the manager for the Price office. Then adding the drilling at Lila Canyon Mine has been very successful. Foam will be injected this week, and water will be where the fire is. The Dingell Act Land Exchanges appraisals came in too high, so bids are being reopened, which could be a long process. He continued speaking about the Little Cedar Mountain bike trail plans. This is a field-driven office project, not a Dingell Act so that other areas could be considered. It was pointed out that it is close to the Good Water Rim Trail, and there are no archaeological features in these areas to be considered. The gravel pit at Hadden Wash was also discussed. An Environmental Analysis is needed with a reclamation plan from Emery County for continued use.

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

No one was present

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

Dal Gray, DOGM, reported that new applications had been received with the added prices in natural gas. Also, some closed wells are again beginning to open.

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

Chris Wood Grand County sago trail has been heavily used; they will expand the trailhead. We need to help get more water up there.

The watershed restoration kick-off Meeting is on Dec 7 at @10:00 a.m. In Green River.

Approved the Elk management plan for more opportunities for hunters. This upcoming RAC meeting will be about the Bears and Cougars. Bear's management plan is a 10-year plan. Helicopters will be doing the deer captures on December 10 & 11 to do the study, using blood to study their survival and migration.

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

No one was present.

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

Daren Olsen, Forest Ranger for the Manti LaSal Forest, spoke about the planning and training meetings happening during the winter months for Forest Service personnel. He said that the burning on Trail Mountain was complete, at least for now, and that burn piles in Lowry Water had been burned while there was some snow on the ground.

- **Utah State Parks and Recreation**

Chris Nelson reported that because of funding, the new restrooms at Huntington State Park had been canceled, and instead, the showers there are being renovated. Ice Fishing will be at Millsite on January 13 and 14th. Reminders were given that State Parks and Recreation have been separated and functioned individually. This information resulted from questioning the new street legal HOV licenses required. They will be enforced in the desert and are a simple online course for anyone over 18.

- **Utah State Department of Agriculture**

Addison Healy announced the Castle Valley Crop school coming February 8, 2023, at USU Eastern in Price.

- **Washington Delegation Staff**

No one present

6. Concerned citizens with Emery County-related issues.

No comment

Adjourn