

RAC/RecRAC Meeting Minutes

August 7-8, 2012

Hilton Garden Inn

Indigo Conference Room (main level of hotel)

1731 South Convention Center Drive

St. George, UT

RAC members in attendance: Bill Hopkin, Frank White (Aug 7), Carl Albrecht, Lowell Braxton, Ray Bloxham, Stu Sprouse, Jim Allison, Jim Catlin, Steve Burr, James Nelson, John Malechek, John Harja, Ted Zimmerman, LuAnn Adams

RAC member not in attendance: Bryan Harris

BLM employees in attendance: Juan Palma, Sherry Foot, Jenna Whitlock, Aaron Curtis, Jimmy Tyree, Todd Christensen, Dawna Ferris, Larry Crutchfield, Rene Berkhoudt, Elizabeth Burghard, Thom Jennings, Kim Barnes, Scott Hutchins

August 7

Welcome and Agenda Review

Sherry

RS 2477 Road Issue

Juan/John Harja

Settlement proposal in Juab County is being considered but not yet concluded. The principals and parties are looking to reach a conceptual agreement, and searching for the proper legal document to codify the agreement.

John - RS2477 – was law until October 1976. Repealed in 1976

- Frustration in getting transportation networks
- A lot of time spent arguing on standards
- Supportive of Iron County project
- Need a resolution – 23 Quiet Title Acts
- It is a transportation situation

Juan - I would like to move the issue of roads forward. Utah BLM will issue an Instruction Memorandum (IM) on how to better track roads/inventory. The process will give the BLM better records of our road system.

Aaron Curtis – Clarifications and expansion of sections of IM. An added new section – we may need to reevaluate designated routes

Wilderness process and RS2477 in Washington County? Didn't address 2477, just land adjudications.

Ray Bloxham (for SUWA) distributed position papers on Routes Included in the state of Utah's RS2477 Litigation; and maps of Washington County – state of Utah's RS 2477 Routes in Litigation; state of Utah's RS2477 Litigation on Private Property – 7,726 miles; and state of

Utah's RS2477 Litigation 18,642 segments and 40,508 miles. The papers were not directly related to the agenda items requiring RAC concurrence, and therefore not discussed.

Cedar City RMP

Elizabeth Burghard

Resource Use - Required Decisions

Livestock Grazing

- ❖ Public comment:
 - Expand permitted use
 - Complete environmental assessment prior to authorizing grazing
 - Eliminate livestock grazing in specific areas to address sensitive resources
- ❖ Issues, Conflicts, Opportunities
 - The Cedar City Field Office currently has 159 allotments available for livestock grazing- 135 of those allotments have had their Allotment Management Plans revised since 2004.
 - Current plans identify allotment management categories as (I)mprove, (M)aintain, (C)ustodial
 - Manage for changing environmental conditions including drought
 - Provide for a variety of species by managing for healthy rangelands

Wild Horses

- ❖ Public comment:
 - Ranged from removing all livestock from Herd Areas (HAs) and Herd Management Areas (HMAs) to removing all wild horses.
- ❖ Issues, Conflicts, Opportunities
 - Current HA/HMA man-made boundaries are unworkable; new plan can change to natural boundaries
 - Current allowable horse numbers based on old data; new plan can change allowable numbers
 - Current plan allows minimal fertility control; new plan can consider additional methods

Wildlife

- ❖ Public comment range:
 - Most public comments support the protection of wildlife.
- ❖ Issues, Conflicts, Opportunities
 - Current plans do not fully address special status species or protect crucial deer winter range
 - The new plan will consider ACECs and other protections for wildlife species of concern and their habitats
 - Desired outcomes, strategies, restoration opportunities
 - Restrictions and management actions to conserve species: examples: timing limitations for disruptive activities
 - Species focus: Utah prairie dog, Mexican Spotted Owl, pygmy rabbit, greater sage-grouse, mule deer

ACECs, WSRs, WSAs

- ❖ Public comment:
 - Ranged from managing all nominated areas as ACECs or WSRs to no new protections
 - Evaluated a total of 23 nominations for ACECs which covered approximately 1 million acres, many of which overlapped
- ❖ Issues, Conflicts, Opportunities
 - Current plans did not designate any ACECs or WSRs
 - New plan will consider a full range of ACECs and WSRs

Cultural Resources

- ❖ Public comment range:
 - Concerns over travel management and potential impacts to cultural resources
 - Special management designations for cultural resources
 - Request for special attention to rock art sites
- ❖ Issues, Conflicts, Opportunities
 - Identify specific cultural resource decisions, or restrictions
 - Identify measures to proactively manage and use important cultural resources

Renewable Energy

- ❖ Public comment:
- ❖ Ranged from developing all types of renewable energy to their fullest potential to only development in previously disturbed areas with few resource conflicts
- ❖ Issues, Conflicts, Opportunities
 - Old plans do not address solar, wind or biomass
 - New plan will consider renewable energy zones and address biomass issues
 - Tie in to PEIS for Wind and Solar energy development

Land Tenure

- ❖ Public comment:
- ❖ Received numerous requests for disposal of public land, primarily where we have isolated parcels adjacent to municipalities.
- ❖ Issues, Conflicts, Opportunities
 - Identify lands for retention and acquisition, as well as those for disposal
 - Identify community expansion and open space needs

Recreation

- Public comment:
- Ranged from emphasizing motorized recreation to providing quiet recreational opportunities
- Issues, Conflicts, Opportunities
- Currently 3 Peaks recreation area is only designated SRMA; new plan will consider motorized and non-motorized SRMAs

- Current plans allow all uses almost anywhere; new plan will consider different type of uses in different areas
- Identification of Special Recreation Management Areas and Extended Recreation Management Areas

Transportation

- ❖ Public comment range:
 - No restrictions on OHV use to limiting OHV use to a minimum number of routes which can be patrolled and maintained.
- ❖ Issues, Conflicts, Opportunities
 - Current plan allows cross-country travel through most of the CCFO; new plan will designate areas as open, limited or closed
 - Current travel plan is outdated; a new Travel Management Plan will be completed after the RMP

Public Comment Periods

- Draft Environmental Impact Statement
 - ❖ Notice of Availability published Fall 2013
 - ❖ 90-Day comment period
 - ❖ Public Meetings in Cedar City, Beaver and Salt Lake City
 - ❖ Proposed Resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement
 - ❖ Notice of Availability published Early 2015
 - ❖ 30-Day protest period
 - ❖ 60-day Governor's Consistency Review period

Jim Catlin (for Wild Utah Project) distributed position papers on Pinion-juniper forest and the sagebrush steppe, Cedar City RMP, but the papers were not directly related to the agenda items requiring RAC concurrence, and therefore not discussed.

St. George RMP

Jimmy Tyree

- ❖ Resource Management Plans/Environmental Impact Statement (section 1974 PL 111-11)
 - Red Cliffs NCA
 - Beaver Dam Wash NCA
- ❖ St. George FO RMP Amendment
 - ACECs (Priority Biological Areas section 1979 PL 111-11)
 - OHV Area Designation
- ❖ Implementation Planning/Environmental Assessment
 - Comprehensive Travel and Transportation Management Plan (section 1977 PL 111-11)
- ❖ Legislative Mandates: P.L.111-11, “Activities must conserve, protect, and enhance ...ecological, scenic, wildlife, recreational, cultural, historical, natural, educational, and scientific resources. Protect values the NCA was designated for.
- ❖ Management Direction from I.M. 2009-215; 2009-226
- ❖ Implement protective management by Land Use Plan decisions, suspending actions that damage recognized values; identify and document resource values that lead to the designation of the NCA. Install signs, educate staff about designations; monitor and patrol; develop land use and activity plans

- ❖ NCA is within the annexation boundaries of the Cities of St. George, Ivins, Santa Clara, Hurricane, Washington, and Leeds/Silver Reef
- ❖ Receives intensive, primarily non-motorized recreational use (509,448 visitor days in FY 11)
- ❖ Has extensive hiking, equestrian, and mountain biking trail system

Red Cliffs NCA - Recreation

- ❖ Public comment:
- ❖ Ranged from restrict recreation uses to develop new or more extensive recreational trails (OHV, bike, hiking, equestrian, etc.)
- ❖ Issues, Conflicts, Opportunities
 - ❖ Recreation demand has grown dramatically
 - ❖ 130 miles of trails – not designed with user preferences
 - ❖ Habitat damage due to braided/user created trails

Red Cliffs NCA – Rights of Ways

- ❖ Public comment:
- ❖ Do not authorize new right of ways to provide for new rights of ways
- ❖ Issues, Conflicts, Opportunities
 - ❖ Currently managed as a ROW avoidance area.
 - ❖ Utility maintenance completed according to established utility protocol .
 - ❖ Establishment of new corridors
 - ❖ Protection of NCA Resource Values

Red Cliffs NCA – Northern Transportation Route

- ❖ Public comment:
- ❖ Ranged from do not authorize any new highway facility to analyzing 6 different alignments submitted by Washington County
- ❖ Issues, Conflicts, Opportunities
 - ❖ proposed alignments are through critical habitat for Mojave Desert Tortoise
 - ❖ covered under a section 10 permit
 - ❖ New highway may be inconsistent with NCA direction Conserve, Protect and Enhance

Beaver Dam Wash NCA

- Managed by the St. George Field Office
- Remote but very accessible via Interstate 15 and “old Highway 91”
- Old Spanish Trail National Historic Trail traverses 3-5 miles of NCA

Beaver Dam Wash NCA - Recreation

- ❖ Public comment:
- ❖ Ranged from restricting recreation uses to developing new or more extensive recreational trails and facilities (OHV, bike, hiking, equestrian, rock climbing, etc.)
- ❖ Issues, Conflicts, Opportunities
 - ❖ Designated critical for Mojave Desert Tortoise

- ❖ Congressionally designated road areas limit recreation management opportunities for some areas.

Beaver Dam NCA – Livestock Grazing

- ❖ Public comment:
- ❖ Manage livestock grazing at current levels to manage the NCA as unavailable to livestock grazing
- ❖ Issues, Conflicts, Opportunities
 - ❖ Three allotments within NCA
 - ❖ All are “I” category – Intensely managed
 - ❖ Rangeland Health impacted by repeated wildfires
 - ❖ Managing in accordance with Tortoise Recovery Plan
 - ❖ Fuels Treatments /to minimize impacts from repeated wildfires

SGFO Plan Amendment

- ❖ Public comment range:
- ❖ ACEC’s - Manage all nominated areas as ACECs to no new designations.
- ❖ OHV area designation
 - Areas open to cross-country travel
 - Areas limited to designated routes, times and types of vehicles
 - Areas closed to motorized vehicle use
- ❖ Issues, Conflicts, Opportunities
- ❖ Separate incompatible uses, quiet recreation, scenic opportunities, etc.

Synopsis of Issues for the SGFO Planning Effort

- Manage diverse recreation uses within the Urban Interface.
- Protect critical habitat for multiple species.
- Protection of NCA Resource Values as Stated in the Legislation
- Northern Corridor
- Travel Management Planning for 2000 miles of routes

Public Comment Periods

- Draft Environmental Impact Statement
 - ❖ Notice of Availability published Winter 2013
 - ❖ 90-Day comment period
 - ❖ Public Meetings in St. George, Hurricane, and Salt Lake City
 - ❖ Proposed Resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement
 - ❖ Notice of Availability published Early 2014
 - ❖ 30-Day protest period
 - ❖ 60-day Governor’s Consistency Review period

Sage Grouse IM – Progress Report

Juan

-Quincy Bahr (Utah State Office) is leading the Utah planning effort. We are going to be working on alternatives very soon.

- The governor’s task force was put together to draft final recommendations for the governor by September.

-At this time, the BLM is looking in to how to address grazing in sage grouse habitat, when we put the alternatives together.

Jim Catlin (for Wild Utah Project) distributed position papers on Sage Grouse Recovery Alternative-Comments, but the papers were not directly related to the agenda items requiring RAC concurrence, and therefore not discussed.

Lake Mountain Urban Interface Conflict

Jill Silvey, FOM

Target shooting in the Lake Mountains area and associated resource conflicts have increased over time. The BLM Salt Lake Field Office (SLFO) and Utah's School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration are working with private landowners, Utah County, and other stakeholders to develop alternatives for better management of target shooting in the area.

Issues: Wildfire, target shooting fires, fire investigation, cost of fire, public safety and property, litter and dumping, cultural resources and wildlife.

Potential solutions: Lake Mountain is not the only area in the West Desert that experiences heavy target shooting pressure. While it's clearly the most heavily used, if changes or restrictions are put in place on Lake Mountain with consideration to other areas, the problem will simply be transferred to other public land.

Near-term solutions: Current statewide fire restrictions – these include campfires, fireworks, all steel-core ammunition, tracers and exploding target use on state and public lands in Utah. This is a temporary solution to a long-term problem. Temporary shooting restrictions on BLM-administered land near Highway 68 – SLFO, in cooperation with local officials, is planning to prohibit shooting in a geographically limited, high-risk area. This restriction would cover the smallest area necessary to promote public safety and would be in effect for two years.

Mid-term solutions: To reduce the potential spread of wildfire – create fuelbreaks around designated shooting areas; use animal grazing in select areas to keep plants down; improve roads in strategic locations to provide better fire breaks and access; designate helicopter landing, fueling and dipping sites for faster and safer operations in the event of a wildfire.

Long-term solutions: Designate appropriate ammunition and targets; designated shooting area; alternate shooting area; new recreation opportunities; outdoor cultural resources museum

Challenges: Close small portion of Hwy 68 to target shooting; scattered land ownership; steel-jacketed ammunition; educating public; need to talk to the recreators; talk to UDOT about fencing; safety

Washington County Lands Bill

Jimmy Tyree

Originally introduced in Congress in 2006 as the Washington Co. Growth and Conservation Act; Reintroduced in 2008; Strong public involvement spearheaded by a community/citizens group call Citizens for Dixie's Future; Result was major changes to the proposed legislation; Reduced the amount of Federal land available for disposal from over 25,000 acres to approx. 6,000 acres; "Northern Corridor" language changed from being located within the NCA to "somewhere in Washington Co."; Signed into law March 30, 2009.

Key Points: Designated NLCS Units; Lands Actions; Planning

Coordination and Consultation: External; State Agencies; Washington County

Milestones - 2009: Pre-plan and budget completed for RMP statement of work completed, contract awarded to Booze Allen Hamilton; kick-off meetings held with contract team. Transfer of the 640 ac section to the Shivwits band of the Paiute

Milestones – 2010: FRN-May 10, 2010; Cooperating agencies established; Public scoping for RMPs and Travel Planning; Scoping reports completed for RMPs and Travel Planning; Class 1 cultural resource overview; Statement of work completed for Travel Management Plan Route Evaluations-contract awarded to ARS. Route data assembled by BLM, kick-off meetings held with contractor; Baseline data collection completed; ORV evaluations meetings for S&SR planning with Zion National Park; Public scoping for Wilderness Management Plans; Scoping report completed; Public scoping for Wild and Scenic River Management Plan; Scoping report completed November 2010.

Milestones – 2011: Socio-Economic Workshop hosted by US Forest Service Enterprise; Two RMP/Plan Amendment Alternative Development meetings; Two coordination meetings with Washington County, Dixie MPO, UDOT, FHWA, USFWS- “northern transportation route” alternatives; Three Landscape Conservation Forecast Modeling Workshops; Final property conveyance to Washington county – total of five parcels/357 acres; ID Team review and evaluation of 700,000 acres of nominated ACECs; Travel plan route evaluation and alternative development meetings; Alternative development-W&SR

Milestones – 2012: Socio-Economic baseline report for RMPs/Plan amendment completed; ACEC tech reports completed; Statement of work for Wilderness Management Plan completed-contract let for NEPA and editorial assistance; Kick-off meetings with new Booze Allen Hamilton project managers; Alternatives development on-going; Completion of two Wilderness Management Plans; Completion of draft RMPs; Completion of draft plan amendment

August 8

Northern Corridor Route Field Tour – The RAC toured the Red Cliffs National Conservation Area (NCA) to look at the area where alternative alignments for the Northern Transportation Route have been proposed to BLM by Washington County to be evaluated in the RMP being developed for the NCAs. (Maps given as handouts and copies are available upon request)

Recreation RAC Business

Aaron Curtis

BLM Moab Campground Overview

- Fees initiated in 1960s
- 26 fee campgrounds
- 24 reservable group campsites
- 4 additional campgrounds authorized but not constructed
- Fees raised in 1991 and 2007
- Proposed fee increase would offset inflation over the past 21 years
- Fiscal year 2011: 86,000 visitors and \$521,846 in revenue
- Campgrounds provide:
 - essential visitor health and safety services
 - critical resource protection measures
 - significant contributions to the Grand County economy

Draft Business Plan for BLM Moab Campgrounds
Fee Proposal Summary

<u>Campsite</u>	<u>Existing Fee</u>	<u>Proposed Fee</u>
Less Developed	\$8/night	\$10/night
More Developed	\$12/night	\$15/night
Less Developed Reservable Group Site	\$8/night \$15 reservation fee \$2.50/person/day	\$10/night \$20 reservation fee \$3.50/person/day
More Developed Reservable Group Site	\$12/night \$15 reservation fee \$3.00/person/day	\$15/night \$20 reservation fee \$4/person/day

5-Year Average
Annual Campground
Expenditures: \$636,540

Sources:

- \$372,740 from campground revenues (59%)
- \$263,800 from appropriated funding (41%)

Expenditure Breakdown:

- \$425,732 in labor (67%)
- \$210,808 in operations (33%)

5-Year Average
Annual Campground
Labor Costs: \$425,732

- 67% of total expenditures
- Contributes to labor costs for:
 - 3 outdoor recreation planners
 - 8 maintenance workers
 - 2 law enforcement officers
 - 1 reservation clerk
 - 2 park rangers
- Labor provides:
 - DAILY restroom cleaning
 - Patrols for compliance, visitor safety, and resource protection
 - Facility maintenance and construction

5-Year Average
Annual Campground
Operating Costs: \$210,808

- 33% of total expenditures
- Regularly pays for:
 - garbage disposal
 - toilet paper and cleaning supplies

- toilet pumping and sewage disposal
- picnic tables, shade shelters, fire rings, etc.
- Contributes as needed to larger construction projects

BLM Moab Campground Revenues

- 5-Year Annual Average Revenue: \$428,248
- Fiscal Year 2011 Revenues: \$521,846
- Estimated Fiscal Year 2013 Revenues with Proposed Fee Rates: \$575,782
- 5-Year Average Annual Operating Costs: \$636,540

Rationale for Campground Fee Increase:

Cost Recovery Method

Goal is to generate enough revenue to cover total operating costs:

- 5-Year Average Annual Operating Costs: \$636,540
- Estimated 2013 Revenues with Proposed Fee Rates: \$575,782
- Estimated Fiscal Year 2013 Expenditures: \$680,000
- Proposed fee rates fall \$104,218, or 15%, short of fully cover 2013's projected operating costs
- *HOWEVER*, appropriated funding has contributed an average of \$263,800, or 41%, of total operating costs over the past 5 years

Rationale for Recreation Fee Increase:

Fair Market Value

Comparison to Other Public Campgrounds:

- Proposed fee rate of \$15/night would still be the lowest campground fees in Moab
- National and State Parks also charge an entrance fee on top of camping fees
- Arches National Park charges a \$10 entrance fee, \$20/night campsite fee, and a \$9 reservation fee
- Comparison to Private Campgrounds:
- Average campsite \$30/night
- Prices range from \$25 to \$52/night
- Prices are increased during special events
- Provide highest level of development
-

2014 Priorities for Revenue Increase

#1: Maintain current level of visitor services

#2: Replace aging infrastructure

- Toilets
- Fire rings
- Picnic tables

#3: Construct new facilities

- Additional shade shelters

4 RAC-authorized campgrounds

Socioeconomic Impacts

- 2007 study determined 60% of BLM Moab visitors had annual incomes above \$50,000
- BLM provides cheapest camping opportunities in the Moab area
- Low costs and reservable group campsites ensure that Moab remains affordable and accessible for all visitors, especially youth groups
- No anticipated impacts to low-income or minority populations

Consequences of Not Raising Fees

- Reduction in visitor services and facility maintenance, including:
 - Restroom cleaning
 - Toilet pumping
- Fewer infrastructure improvements
- Increased environmental impacts
- Continued levels of reliance on appropriated funding

Public Outreach Efforts

- 30-day public comment period on draft business plan's fee increase proposal
- Business plan posted on BLM websites, Facebook, and Twitter
- Press release issued to regional media outlets
 - Article in the Moab Times-Independent
 - Posted on Woodall's Campground Management website

2 comments received from regular campground visitors:

- 1 comment was supportive of fee increase
- 1 comment identified concerns with fully developing all campgrounds
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Cindy Calbaum, Recreation Manager, Dixie National Forest, Escalante Ranger District presented, for information only – and not for voting – an overview of the Cowpuncher Guard Station Cabin Rental (Dixie National Forest). It opened in the fall of 2006 and was instantly popular. Occupancy steadily increased until the cabin was 80% occupied on weekdays and 100% on weekends.

The cabin opened with a \$45/night fee and remained \$45 until it closed in June of 2011 after being destroyed by fire.

The FS has purchased a 20 ft. yurt which it plans to use as a temporary replacement until the cabin can be rebuilt.

The amenities: fire wood, fully stocked kitchen, battery operated lanterns, propane stove and oven, propane refrigerator, drinking water/shower, beds with mattresses.

Public support: local business owners are frequent user of the cabin; city officials support development of winter recreation

Use of yurt after cabin is rebuilt: Move to another location and use as additional rental; move to another location and use as warming hut for skiers and snowmobilers.

Public Comment

Lowell Braxton, RAC Chairperson

-Evan Day (Rockhounds) – Pay attend to documents and efforts of reforestation and sage brush issues. Concern about fire affecting sage grouse next to ranching. Need basic rockhounding access. Richfield FO travel plan—roads designated – how do we go about getting roads opened that used to be closed. Money is needed to maps or put them on-line.

-Lisa Rutherford (Citizen) – Referred to an article published in the Spectrum (November 8, 2011). *“What are the real costs of roads?”Renewed discussion of a “northern corridor” to move traffic across Washington County is underway. Local politicians and planners are working angles.*

The St. George traffic website projects 60,000 vehicles per day by 2035 will cause Red Hills Parkway to experience “failure conditions particularly at intersection.” However, all current northern corridor ideas would dump onto Red Hills Parkway. Costs for a road vary from \$56 million for a road from Red Hills Parkway to the current Washington Parkway (near I-15 Exit 10) to \$98 million for a Northern Washington Parkway from Red Hills Parkway to Exit 13 (eight miles). Referring to the \$98 million northern corridor that passes through the reserve, the county’s Regional Transportation Plan states: “We highly recommend that this corridor be removed from the regional transportation plan.” The county’s cost/benefit study, which supports the \$56 million road as providing the highest benefit relative to cost, offers this qualifier: “None of the options recued traffic on Bluff St., St. George Blvd., and Red Cliffs Dr. to the point that congestion on these corridors was eliminated.”

The road’s construction is questionable given that the county’s Vision Dixie planning principles call for limited sprawl but this seems to encourage it.

Recently, local leaders vocalized support for the Vision Dixie process at the economic update session, but when you see the area that has already been leveled for this development, it certainly makes one wonder about their conviction.

If the growth is being directed with such vigor to the south of our county, why work to build a very expensive and controversial Northern Corridor – one that will not solve our traffic problems as shown by various studies available to the public.

Maintaining the integrity of the HCP for the tortoise reserve/NCA – an honorable agreement made by local governments in ‘good faith’ – is the right thing to do and will help contain sprawl to the county’s south area.

Lisa also referred to this report: *UDOT, Red Hills Parkway, SR-18 (Bluff Street) to Industrial Road Environmental Assessment, Chapter 2, Alternatives (November 2007) Report*

Of all the alternatives considered, this alternative would best accommodate east/west travel demand on Red Hills Parkway between Bluff Street and Industrial Road because it would divert traffic off Red Hills Parkway and onto the Northern Corridor. This would result in a substantial improvement in traffic conditions along Red Hills Parkway. Under this alternative, traffic conditions would also slightly improve on St. George Blvd but would slightly deteriorate on

Bluff St. Implementation of the Northern Corridor would also reduce vehicle hours of delay on Red Hills Parkway.

The Northern Corridor Alternative would not meet the objective of minimizing impacts to the reserve. This alternative would affect approximately 90 undisturbed acres within the reserve and bisect the reserve, resulting in desert tortoise habitat fragmentation. USFWS does not support any new road through Zone 3 of the Red Cliffs Desert Reserve. According to a letter from USFWS, “such a road would compromise the commitments on which the Washington County HCP was based, is likely to compromise the biological integrity of the Upper Virgin Recovery Unit (already the smallest recovery unit), and may result in an adverse modification of designated critical habitat.”

The city of St. George, UDOT, and FHWA determined that the anticipated implementation challenges and potential environmental effects, as previously described, would be substantial and thereby eliminated the Northern Corridor alternative from further consideration.

-Annette Densley (Leeds Coalition for Responsible Land Use) – East of Leeds, reserve has undergone a fire. It is now a fragile reserve. There is a feasibility study, east Washington County, to build a proposed road from Sand Hollow Road and follow Babylon Road. It is a narrow canyon, endangered plants, deep pools for endangered species. Unnecessary road from Hurricane to Leeds. Protect reserve. Feasibility study done by November.

-Mike Small (Citizens for Dixie’s Future) – RS2477 issue – revise statute. Need to find a better way to reduce costs and time on this issue. Northern Corridor – Mr. Small submitted written comments – copy provided upon request.

-Terry Wenstrand (Citizen) – Northern Corridor not needed because volume trends are decreasing. Against the Corridor. Mr. Wenstrand submitted a chart of Travel Monitoring – copy provided upon request.

-Alan Gardner (Co. Commission, Washington Co.) – The reserve is important to Washington County. Not wanting to do anything to jeopardize that. Not building a road until it is needed. Biologists looking to determine ways to mitigate. Cities feel that it is very important.

-Dan McArthur (Mayor, St. George) – We do have traffic problems, terrain environments, residential growth. HCP is a great asset to us, but roads are important – airport service and job creations. We need to find a way to accomplish these needs. Protect and preserve for future generations.

-Dana Mier (DOT) – Industry not known to be environmentally friendly. Concerned about losing 50% of tortoise habitat over the last 10 years. Would like to talk about these issues – “Sit down at the table.” It’s an uphill battle and long way to go to find common ground and solutions. New paradigm shifts – DOT will look at project differently concerning the environmental issues.

