

UTAH QUALITY GROWTH COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, May 25, 2005, 11:00 a.m.
Olmsted Conference Room, East Office Building
State Capitol Complex
Salt Lake City, Utah

MEMBERS PRESENT

ALLEN, Dave	Summit County Rancher
BARBER, Brad	Member At –Large
BILLINGS, Lewis	Mayor, City of Provo
BIRD, Darin	Department of Natural Resources for Mike Styler
BLACKHAM, Leonard	Commissioner, Dept Agriculture & Food
CHRISTENSEN, Carlton	Salt Lake City Council
DAVIS, Jaren L.	Utah Association of Realtors
KOHLER, Mike	Wasatch County Council
RICHARDS, Flint	Utah Farm Bureau Federation
SMITH, Darrell	Mayor, City of Draper
STYLER, Mike (telephone)	Executive Director, Department of Natural Resources

MEMBERS EXCUSED

CAIN, Camille	Weber County Commissioner
LOFGREN, Dan	Utah Home Builders
PAGE, Carol	Davis County Commissioner

GOPB STAFF

BENNETT, John	Project Manager
BOHN, Laura	Project Manager
CARVER, Brian	Project Manager
NEILSON, Nancy	Administrative Assistant

GUESTS

BEDEL, Mark	Planner, DCED
EVANS, R. Mont	Mayor, Riverton City
FISHER, Wendy	Utah Open Lands
LEHMAN, Jill	Government Relations, The Nature Conservancy
SLATER, Bruce	Department of Environmental Quality

Agenda item #1 – Welcome and Introductions – Carlton Christensen

Carlton excused Dan Lofgren, Chair (his father is being released from the hospital today) and after welcoming everyone he had each person introduce themselves.

A special award of appreciation was presented to John Bennett for five years of dedicated service to the Utah Quality Growth Commission signed by Governor Jon M. Huntsman, Jr. and the Commission members. Carlton presented the award.

Agenda item #2 – Public Comments – 5 minutes

No public comment was made.

***Agenda item #3 – Approval of Minutes from April 27, 2005**

Approval of the minutes for the April 27, 2005 meeting will be postponed until next month.

Agenda item #4 - Discussion of GOPB Budget Request – John Bennett
(See Memorandum in packet for more details.)

John reviewed past appropriations. There was no appropriation for the McAllister Fund in 2002. In 2001 the appropriation was for \$3,000,000.00 (a two year appropriation) and the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget (who in accordance with state statute provides support staff for the Commission) received a two year appropriation of \$94,000.00. The McAllister Fund was cut in 2003 from \$2,287,200.00 to \$2,037,200.00 and GOPB funds were cut from \$67,822.00 to \$53,580.00. In the years 2004 and 2005 GOPB received \$53,000.00 each year.

For Fiscal Year 2005-2006 Mike Hansen, Manager of State and Local Planning is requesting \$50,000.00 for John Bennett who provides staff support for the Commission full time. Another \$50,000.00 was requested for additional staff support provided by Mike Hansen, Brian Carver, Nancy Neilson and Laura Bohn. For miscellaneous overhead, \$5,000.00 was requested. The total request for the Commission to consider is \$105,000.00. Because GOPB has had to cover much of the staff support expenses in the past and it is hoped that some of that money can be recouped.

Note: There was a grant for the City of Holladay rescinded because of ripeness. The amount was \$250,000.00. All but \$60,000.00 was reallocated for other grants and \$1,000.00 was a reimbursement to GOPB for support of the Vibrant Downtown conference. The balance for expenses such as travel expenses for site visits, project evaluation, etc. will be \$59,000.00. The fact that there are 34 (35 with Riverton City's) pre-applications means that travel for site visits could be extensive and evaluation of all 35 projects will entail considerable effort by technical advisors.

Action by the Commission will be taken on this request next month.

Agenda item #5 – Critical Lands Subcommittee Report: Recommendation regarding LeRay McAllister Fund Pre-Applications – John Bennett

The Utah Quality Growth Commission’s Critical Lands Subcommittee made the following recommendations:

- All of the applicants will be asked to submit a full application.
- Letters to applicants will include a caution that funds are limited.
- Each applicant with more than one application must prioritize the projects in the event only one can be funded. This does not mean more than one will not be funded.
- Established criteria will determine which projects are considered. These include:
 - The parcel is unique and irreplaceable
 - The project has multiple benefits to the public
 - The project is cost effective – has high leverage
 - The project urgency – (If it isn’t done this year will it be available next year?)
- Every named easement holder must consent in writing for full applications. Applicant must talk to the proposed easement holder before submitting an application.
- Ripeness of the project must be considered. Is it actually ready to receive the funds? This will avoid committing funds while an extension or numerous extensions are requested.
- The McAllister Funds will not pay for acquisition costs such as appraisals, closings, environmental assessments, etc.
- A case by case determination will be made for applicants to determine what additional requirements will be placed on each application. (An example is that they cannot hold fee title and name themselves as an easement holder.)

The applicants are as follows:

LeRay McAllister Critical Land Conservation Fund: 8th Funding Cycle

	<u>Requested Funds/Match</u>		
1. Town of Francis	\$ 375,000 -567,360	471 acres	Conservation easement
2. Sportsmen for Habitat	700,000 – 1,000,000	569 acres	Conservation easement
3. Div of Forestry, Fire...	600,000 – 2,400,000	3,721 acres	Conservation easement
4. Div of Forestry, Fire...	580,000 – 1,530,000	4,912 acres	Conservation easement
5. Tree Utah	30,000 – 441,630	20 acres	Restoration
6. Salt Lake City Corp	100,000 – 100,000	110 acres	Restoration
7. Summit County Basin..	500,000 – 1,421,000	104 acres	Conservation easement
8. South Jordan City	250,000 – 250,000	2.74 acres	Fee title purchase
9. West Jordan	350,000 – 510,000	18.84 acres	Conservation Easement
10. City of Holladay	250,000 – 4,610,000	7.8 acres	Fee title purchase
11. Utah Dept of Ag	200,000 – 1,325,000	88.8 acres	Conservation Easement

12. Trust for Public Land	500,000 – 1,500,000	46 acres	Conservation Easement
13. Div of Wildlife...	1,200,000 – 1,800,000	530 acres	Conservation Easement
14. Springville City	1,350,000 – 1,350,000	27 acres	Fee title or Easement
15. Trust for Public Lands	750,000 – 9,050,000	1,035 acres	Conservation Easement
16. Iron County	500,000 – 600,000	233 acres	Conservation Easement
17. Nature Conservancy	500,000 – 707,250	800 acres	Conservation Easement
18. Nature Conservancy	102,605 – 243,961	(_____)	Restoration
19. Nature Conservancy	900,000 – 2,538,680	6,000 acres	Conservation Easement
20. Nature Conservancy	600,000 – 669,400	870 acres	Conservation Easement
21. Nature Conservancy	500,000 – 1,397,000	310 acres	Conservation Easement
22. Salt Lake County	125,000 – 125,000	5.5 acres	Easement or Fee title
23. Trust for Public Lands	500,000 – 2,000,000	754 acres	Conservation Easement
24. Utah Botanical USU	446,223 – 3,253,777	64 acres	Restoration
25. Utah Open Lands	800,000 – 1,200,000	80 acres	Conservation Easement
26. North Salt Lake	900,000 – 900,000	50 acres	Conservation Easement
27. Utah Open Lands	500,000 – 950,000	20 acres	Fee title purchase
28. Division of Wildlife	270,000 – 270,000	88 acres	Conservation Easement
29. Wasatch Warm Spring.	500,000 – 4,226,000	18 acres	Fee title purchase
30. City of St. George	185,000 – 185,000	15.2 acres	Fee title purchase
31. Sportsmen for H...	2,000,000 – 2,500,000	5,600 acres	Conservation Easement
32. Sportsmen for H	500,000 – 700,000	160 acres	Conservation Easement
33. Division of Wildlife..	210,000 – 2,040,000	10,000 acres	Conservation Easement
34. Pleasant Grove City	367,500 – 367,500	3.93 acres	Fee title purchase

The total dollar amount of the applications equals \$18,141,328.00.

The following points were made:

- There is a 20 acre limit on fee title ownership for these projects
- A minimum match of 50% is required by statute...
- Summit County Basin open Space Advisory Committee is a county organization and is an advisory group
- It is the desire of the state to avoid having the Sage-grouse become an endangered species.
- The Commission has had and continues to have an interest in the Corner Canyon project
- Never before has the Commission had to consider two different applications on the same property. The Commission cannot be the referee. If North Salt Lake and Salt Lake City can submit a single application it will be considered

Action taken:

The motion was made by Dave Allen to accept the recommendations by the Critical Lands Subcommittee with a notation that because of the urgency of the Riverton City application it was accepted late and it was accepted late because it is still early in the application process. Therefore, it will be considered with all of the other applications and all applicants (North Salt Lake and Salt Lake City with a single application) will be asked to submit a full application. The motion was seconded by Jaren Davis. The motion carried unanimously.

Agenda item #6 – Emergency Pre-Application from Riverton City: Request by Riverton City to be included in this round of pre-application – Mayor Mont Evans

Mayor Mont Evans explained the urgency of the Riverton City application through maps and discussion and received a favorable review by the Commission. In essence, there are critical lands for wildlife habitat and recreation that can be preserved this year but the opportunity may be lost by next year. This is because of development applications that are already in or are expected to be. (Riverton City is asking for \$250,000.00 with a match of \$2,000,000.00 from various sources.)

Action taken:

Leonard Blackham made the motion to accept the Riverton City application and Jaren Davis seconded the motion. Nine votes were required for the motion to carry which was the case.

Lunch Break - (No sponsor) \$9.00 per person

Agenda item #7 – Discussion on Nexus between Conservation and Economic Development – Presentations and discussion from the conservation perspective. and Wendy Fisher the Director of Utah Open Lands)

Review by John Bennett of Principles of Economic Development from last meeting:

Principles of Economic Development: (The goal is to make a list that will be useful to the Governor and others.)

1. Water is a priority. Water sheds and water quality are the priority in the economic development and conservation link.
2. Critical lands' planning is important. Plan in advance what needs to happen.
<http://www.planning.utah.gov/CriticalLandsHome.htm>
 - Anticipate growth
 - Identify lands for conservation
3. Rural revitalization through County Resource Management Planning (CRMP
<http://www.planning.utah.gov/CRMP.htm>)
4. Conservation planning at the local level should be stressed so that people at the local level are deciding as much as possible what should be conserved.
5. Derive value in an economic sense from public lands.
6. Tax policy. We need to think about the impact of our tax policy on conservation.

There was some discussion on the need for the farming and ranching industry to be respected and looked upon as a unique heritage and a way of life to be preserved. Other topics were discussed and could be possible principles.

7. Co-Existence - Open Space observers/Recreationists/Farmers and Ranchers need to co-exist. (Farmers can't lose grazing rights or their lifestyle can't be maintained.)

8. Transportation – (Are there corridors to recreation gems? Will traffic flow freely?)
9. Balance

Presentation: Dave Livermore, Utah State Director of The Nature Conservancy - Land Trust - Environmental Conservation Organization - See website @ <http://www.nature.org/> .

A power point presentation by Dave Livermore entitled “Preserving Our Critical Lands, Waters & Wildlife” cited three factors in choosing a project. When biological significance, achievable results and threats converge, you have a ‘priority’ conservation project. The LeRay McAllister Fund has made it possible to preserve 33,000 acres through 34 projects in the last four years. Private and Public Lands’ conservation projects in Utah have preserved a total of 881,969 acres between the years 1984-2004.

“Utah’s Quality of Life: Economy, Community, Environment” were listed above the question, “Are we investing enough in all three?” “(On the symphony stage...our economic development depends on it...saving taxpayer’s \$\$ in the long run)” There was discussion about

There was some discussion about the ‘cluster’ zoning option for applicants. This way they could use local planning options to fund their projects by zoning a small portion of their land for twin homes for example and save the taxpayer money.

Our organization has been in your area for twenty plus years. One of our projects transferred property to BYU for a research site. We are a 501c3 nonprofit organization with 6000 members and an advisory board that includes 27 local civic leaders including Jake Garn.

We are hallmarked for working with communities, not against communities, no litigation and we are concerned with all types of critical lands. How do they intersect with the economics of our state?

How do you put a price tag on preserving watershed instead of building a water treatment plant every few years as they do back east? Have you saved money by protecting open lands?

Certainly our natural features are our competitive advantage. The Olympics coming here is an example and the fact that the Outdoor Retailers come here. People have chosen Utah for business because of our Open Space.

Conservation Is A Conservative Value

- Willing Seller/Willing Buyer
- Private Property Rights
- No Litigation
- Collaboration Not Confrontation
- Community Based conservation
- Good Science & Good Sense

Critical Lands, Waters & Wildlife - Essential to Economic Development

1. Agriculture

- a. Soil Stabilization
- b. Heart of Rural Utah

You are preserving the soils when you are preserving agriculture. You're preserving a part of rural America. You're preserving people who buy farming equipment, who buy fertilizer, small towns and the values of those communities.

2. **Tourism – Utah's #1 Industry**

- a. Scenic Beauty & Natural Wonders
- b. Wildlife & Recreation

We all know that our National Parks bring in millions of visitors and millions of dollars for Tourism. Hunting and fishing and even 'watchable' wildlife are drivers for our economy. Billions of dollars are brought into the state through hunting and fishing. So wildlife is an important part of your world and the economy. (\$40,000,000.00 a year is spent by people to buy birdseed.)

3. **Watershed Protection**

'Ecological Services' Saves Millions

Currently we are working on a huge project that looks down into Zion's National Park. "Virgin River Headwaters Project"

Key features:

- 20,000 acres on Zion Plateau; buffer to Park
- Aspen & ponderosa pine woodlands
- Mountain meadow & riparian habitat
- Deer, elk, cougar, black bear, raptor, habitat
- LaVerken, Bear & Spring Creek watersheds

Fourteen different landowners are interested in putting conservation easements on their property. There is nothing more important than water conservation not only ... in terms of soils and flood control but culinary use and so forth.

Key goals:

- Protect vital watershed of statewide significance; conservation easements keep lands private, traditional uses honored, stays on tax roles

4. **Business**

Fifth Most Diverse State In US

- Utah=biodiversity gold mine
"68% of all pharmaceuticals have natural components and yet only 2% of the world's plant species have been tested for their medicinal qualities."
- Our Quality of Life=Utah's Competitive Advantage

Presentation: Wendy Fisher, Executive Director of Utah Open Lands (PowerPoint, discussion)

- Our first project was Fifteen years ago. We did a project in Oakley to protect their watershed. This saves them \$15,000.00 a year in federally assessed fees and taxes because it is protected. (Their prime revenue comes from the open rodeo they hold every year.)
- The top two reasons people live, work and play here in Utah is because of the scenic beauty and the recreation opportunities. 80% of the people who live on golf courses don't golf. The reason they live there is because of the protected open space. (145,000,000 people engage in muscle powered sports.)

- The LOHAS (The Lifestyles of Health and Sustainability) is a growing number of people in our nation who want to have more connection with the land. They want to have a healthier and a more sustainable way of life and a lot of that is connected to our Open Space.
- We talk of Open Space as a benefit from an Economic perspective because it doesn't require infrastructure. "When Commissioner Leonard Blackham (formerly Senator) and I worked on the Conservation Rollback Relief, one of the things that we found is that Open Space is actually a net revenue to communities. It not only increases surrounding land values but even lands that under Greenbelt that are participating in the tax base end up contributing more than residential homes." For every \$1.00 that is collected in residential revenue (a national figure) the cost is \$1.35. Whereas agriculture only costs a municipality \$.65 for every \$1.00.
- (The Utah Quality Growth Commission advocates balance.)
- Heritage Tourism is greatly increasing! People want to get a sense of the history as well as the environment. And if they don't have the environment to experience the same things that their forefathers did or what historically was there, they lose a sense of that experience. That is a part of what Open Space adds.
- Besides hunting and fishing, 'birders' are increasing and becoming part of the increasing economy of tourism.
- Conservation Alliance – a group of companies who need to have the 'out of doors' in order to sell their product. Many of these companies contribute to conservation projects.
- Outdoor Retailers adds \$56,000,000.00 a year to our economy. They come here because of our recreation areas and downtown facilities.
- Our Open Space is attracting high tech companies to Utah. Even EBay located in Draper because of Utah's Open Space.
- Open Space does preserve property rights.

Agenda item #8 – Administrative Items.

The next meeting is scheduled on Capitol Hill unless other arrangements are made. (TBA)

Action Items:

- **John - Letters of be sent to applicants with seven to eight points of notice.**
- **John – Arrangements for next meeting to be coordinated.**
- **Signatures for John's award to be finished at the next Commission meeting by Commission members**
- **Dave Livermore to provide copy of conservation booklet.**
- **Update Subcommittees lists.**

Adjournment 1:46 p.m.