

**BOARD OF UTAH STATE PARKS AND RECREATION MEETING
ANTELOPE ISLAND STATE PARK
4528 WEST 1700 SOUTH
SYRACUSE, UTAH**

April 23, 2009

Present:

Scott Parson, Chair	Karl Bentley, Vice Chair	Lois Bulloch	
Marty Ott	Bill Bleak	Joe Hull	
Glenn Greenhalgh	Irene Hansen (telephone)	Eli Anderson (telephone)	
Mary Tullius	Mark Forbes	Bruce Hamilton	Wendy Griffith
Rock Smith	Deena Loyola	Jay Christianson	Ron Taylor

Visitors:

Jeff Packer	Elaine Packer	Bryon Saxton
Daniel Foster	Don Johnson	Spence Kinard
Ivan Djambov	Barbara Riddle	Jim Karpowitz
Mike Styler	Tammy Kikuchi	Dan McConkie
Heather Shilton	Jolene Hatch	Chris Haramoto

Vice-Chair Karl Bentley welcomed board members, staff, and visitors to the Utah State Parks and Recreation Board meeting. Chair Parson will be joining the meeting later. He asked everybody present to introduce themselves.

Vice-Chair Bentley reviewed the agenda. He asked board members for approval of the board agenda as presented.

MR. BILL BLEAK MADE A MOTION THAT THE BOARD APPROVE THE STATE PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD AGENDA. MR. GLENN GREENHALGH SECONDED THE MOTION AND IT CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Approval of Minutes

Vice-Chair Bentley asked board members for review and approval of the February 26, 2009 board meeting minutes.

MS. LOIS BULLOCH MADE A MOTION THAT THE BOARD APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 26, 2009 BOARD MEETING. MR. MARTY OTT SECONDED THE MOTION AND IT CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Budget Update

Director Mary Tullius referred board members to the handouts they were given regarding budget reductions. Several meetings have been held with State Park managers and other employees to assist administration in making the decision where budget cuts could be made with the least impact. Once the plan was complete, one-on-one meetings were held with the employees affected. Meetings have been held with several leaders in the Fillmore area regarding the operation plan for Territorial Statehouse State Park Museum. There was an article in the Salt Lake Tribune yesterday regarding the budget reductions and each board member has been given a copy of that article. Volunteer groups will be asked to assist us in running Territorial Statehouse. This has been a very difficult time for all of us. Retirement incentives were offered to those that are eligible to retire. There will be some streamlining and other efficiencies in the parks, such as heritage parks being closed one or two days each week.

State Parks Fee Review

This will be discussed later in the meeting.

Antelope Island State Park DRAFT Resource Management Plan

Planning Coordinator Rock Smith handed out the highlights and recommendations for the Antelope Island State Park Resource Management Plan. Each board member has been given a copy of the entire Resource Management Plan (RMP) for Antelope Island State Park. The highlights were reviewed and discussions held on some of the items.

Antelope Island State Park Manager Ron Taylor discussed the Antelope Island Access Management Plan (AMP) that was created in about 2004. He felt it was a very good, diverse group with that plan and feels the same way about the team that was developed to create this Resource Management Plan. The AMP was built in phases and he explained those phases. All items in phase I have been completed and they are working on the final stages of phase II. Phase III includes hardening some of the trails on the island. There are at least a dozen cultural sites that need to be protected. On certain days of the year, open access events are held so the public can visit more areas of the island. Mr. Taylor feels the Access Management Plan allows him to manage the park properly. The RMP team agreed to adopt the previous AMP, as there are some things that still needed to be completed.

The question was asked if there is a particular group that felt they don't have access to the park. There are some people that have requested to ride horses or hold other activities on the island that are not allowed. Once they are given the explanation of why specific activities are not allowed, they are satisfied. We rely on the public/team process to develop plans that benefit the park and the park users. Park Manager Taylor was asked if that if there were a large group requesting to go horseback riding on the island or hold other activities, how he would handle it. He said he has had requests from some groups and they handle them on an individual basis.

Mr. Taylor said he and his staff are open and receptive to holding new and different events. They hold the annual balloon festival, which now includes kite-flying groups. Park staff put a lot of research into events that are held on the island to ensure they will not damage the resources.

Director Tullius commended Park Manager Taylor and his staff for the job they've done with the park. She was able to drive around prior to the meeting and said the park has done a great job making improvements. We want to continue with phase II of the AMP and try to find the funding to complete phase III.

Vice-Chair Bentley asked Mr. Taylor what his dream is for this park. He said his dream was accomplished when the campground was completed. They have done some projects in phases due to budget restraints and will continue to do so.

Board Member Marty Ott thanked Mr. Taylor for his comments of trying to accommodate changing demographics. He also appreciates park staff not allowing activities that would compromise the fundamental basic principles and core values.

Spence Kinard said the RMP and AMP are in line with what the Friends of Antelope Island want to accomplish. They have been able to hold some events that benefit groups and also benefit the park. Their dream is to continue to see the improvements that are outlined in the RMP be completed. His personal dream is for the marina improvements to be made. He feels the marina can be a great resource for the park and the public.

Wildlife Range Manager Steve Bates reviewed the wildlife management at Antelope Island State Park. Mr. Bates said many of the members of the RMP team were involved in the wildlife management plan, which included several technical individuals.

Planning Coordinator Rock Smith reviewed the public comments that were received regarding the Resource Management Plan. There were three comments received and are included in the RMP. Chair Scott Parson asked what the typical public comment count is for the RMP process. Mr. Smith said it really depends on if there are contentious issues or not. Chair Parson thanked Mr. Smith for his work on the RMP.

Spence Kinard said the Friends of Antelope Island Group is opposed to hunting other than bison on the island. A hunt for deer or bighorn sheep would detract from the public being able to see these animals on the island. Jeff Packer mentioned the RMP is still a draft; therefore, the board can accept or reject any additional documents or comments received.

Antelope Island RMP Comments

Chair Parson welcomed Department of Natural Resources Director Mike Styler. Director Styler thanked those that have worked so hard on the plan and the public citizens that were part of it. He said as he was reading the legislative codes this year, he noticed the code mentions multiple use in state parks in Section 79-4-203.2. He has met with Director

Tullius and Planning Coordinator Smith to voice his concerns. He doesn't feel the RMP is customer friendly and is difficult to follow. He suggested that all plans (i.e., access management plan and wildlife management plan) be included in the RMP rather than having four or five different plans. He contacted several people that were involved in the RMP process to find out what their comments were. They said they had some great ideas, but were told they weren't possible due to lack of funding or lack of staffing. Director Styler doesn't think the plan has the vision it needs. He thinks the Friends of Antelope Island should be asked to assist in raising the funds to do some of these things. It should be put in the plan that we will do these things as funding allows, or as staffing allows, etc. He will now start looking at the plans for the other parks. He would like to take a new look at things such as ATV access on Antelope Island. He wants us to be innovative and figure out ways to do things.

Chair Parson said it is very difficult to have vision when we are being told to cut budgets. Chair Parson asked Mr. Smith if all the innovative ideas that were mentioned during the RMP meetings and turned down were documented. Mr. Smith said notes were taken during the meetings.

Barbara Riddle felt there was no follow-up after the final meeting was held to review the plan once it was drafted. Her recommendation is to get the team back together with the draft plan to discuss comments from Director Styler and the board members. The plan would need to be revised and then opened back up for public comment.

Sand Hollow, Wasatch Mountain, Rock Cliff at Jordanelle, Yuba, Monte Cristo plans are in process. The team process was completed for boating five-year plan and Rock is working on the draft of that.

Chair Parson said we need to make sure to include a long-term vision in the resource management plans. He would like to have the suggestions made during the meetings listed in the plan as future opportunities to be considered. Board Member Glenn Greenhalgh said he feels like we have a great planning team and they do a great job. He would like to see us include all possibilities in the plan. Board Member Marty Ott thanked Mike Styler for being here and allowing the forum for discussion. He said the way the zones are broken down in the plan—they are both visionary and challenging. He congratulated Rock and the team for identifying those needs. Board Member Lois Bulloch said she feels we need to incorporate these ideas into the plans that are in the process right now. It is hard to be visionary when there are budget restraints. Board Member Joe Hull feels the visionary ideas need to be included in the plan, even as an addendum. We should have the vision on the table and if the money is there, it will be done.

Jeff Packer said when the previous management plans were done, visions were included. He was involved in the previous management plan for this island. The vision should not alter the values or core values. There was no question at that time that the public was against hunting. If we allow hunting on the island, it alters the vision. If we allow off-highway vehicles, it also alters the vision. If that vision is changed, make sure the public is aware because in the past, they were against hunting and ATV access on the island.

Barbara Riddle said the Davis Area Convention and Visitors Bureau values the focus on tourism. She commended the staff on the way that was considered and documented in the RMP.

Chair Parson appreciates Director Styler painting the background for his interest into the resource management process. He feels Director Styler's comments were a little stinging to staff that have spent a lot of time and resources building this plan. He said it is the board's job is to approve the plan once it is presented to them. He would encourage Director Styler to work with staff if there are modifications to the process that need to be made. There needs to be some clarification what State Parks and DWR's authority is. Director Styler believes that the way the law reads is that DWR has jurisdiction over the wildlife on state parks.

Heather Shilton, from the Attorney General's Office, addressed the group and provided clarification on the code that Director Styler referenced. The Parks Board has the authority over whether or not hunters are allowed on Antelope Island. There is a memorandum of understanding in place that says DWR cannot open a hunt without the Parks Board allowing it and the RMP addressing it. Rules would need to be amended if hunts were ever allowed.

Director Tullius wants to make it clear that hunting is allowed at some of the state parks. There are a number of agreements in place with the Division of Wildlife Resources to create a partnership. There is a lot of history regarding the hunting issue on Antelope Island

History and Management of Bighorn Sheep in Utah

Division of Wildlife Resources Director Jim Karpowitz discussed his involvement with bighorn sheep. He presented some slides that included historical quotes regarding bighorn sheep. He said modern populations of bighorn

sheep require intensive management because of disease problems. If we are going to have bighorn sheep for future generations, there are ways we need to manage them. They include: 1) Population thinning includes transplants and hunting. 2) Habitat improvement: seedings, burns, and water developments. 3) Treatment for diseases and parasite: oral and direct injection. 4) Predator control.

Director Karpowitz said hunting of bighorn sheep is an important management tool to keep herds balanced and healthy. He said transplanting works very well, but is very expensive and does not keep the sex ratios balanced. Managed hunting removes only a small portion of the oldest rams in the herd. He feels that bighorn sheep hunting can produce badly needed revenue for restoration and management programs. If it weren't for the hunter conservationists, we wouldn't have the bighorn sheep in Utah that we do. Reasons why bighorn should be managed and hunted: 1) bighorn sheep have always been hunted by man; 2) modern populations of bighorn sheep require intensive management or we will lose them; 3) hunting removes surplus rams from a population and keeps sex ratios balanced. Hunting removes only a small portion of the oldest rams in the herd. Bighorn sheep hunting can produce badly needed revenue for restoration and management programs; recreational hunting opportunities for bighorns are limited in Utah in comparison to other big game species. Director Karpowitz is asking that we don't eliminate bighorn sheep hunting as a management option in the RMP. He said they would be willing to share the revenue received from hunting of bighorn and other big game with Antelope Island. He said bighorn sheep conservation permits sell for between \$50,000 and \$100,000 each. Antelope Island could stand to sell four or five permits per year. That shouldn't be the driving factor, but should be a consideration in the management of bighorn sheep. He said the people of the state of Utah own the wildlife on the island, not Parks or Wildlife.

Irene Hansen complimented Director Karpowitz on his presentation. She was very impressed with his passion.

Barbara Riddle asked about the history of bighorn sheep on the island. When they were first placed on the island, they were considered a nursery herd. The plan was to transport the older rams to other areas to augment other herds. That was the plan in the first place, but it is very expensive. She asked why they wouldn't consider transporting the rams to other areas of the state to be hunted. Director Karpowitz said big rams are wanderers and don't stay where they are placed so it is not cost effective. There were 39 sheep placed on the island in 1998. There are about 160 on the island now and about the same number have been relocated. Board Member Marty Ott asked, from a hunter ethic point of view, how would hunters feel about hunting a "captive herd." Director Karpowitz doesn't feel the herd is considered a captive herd, but a wild herd. He said another part of hunting bighorn sheep is that it keeps them wild. Barbara Riddle said from a tourism perspective, it is nice to have these "trophy" sheep here for the tourists to view. That's one of the main reasons that visitors come to Antelope Island. She doesn't feel it should be about the short-term check that would be received from allowing hunting, but the long-term investment of the island that pays for itself in years to come. She would like that to be considered. Jolene Hatch, Antelope Island Biologist, asked Director Karpowitz if there are enough areas to move the bighorn sheep. He said they don't have any new sites at this time, but will continue looking. Bill Bleak asked if there are ongoing plans to transplant sheep, other than just big rams. Director Karpowitz said they will continue researching new areas to transplant them. Board Member Marty Ott asked if the Wildlife Board has considered holding a special hunt for sheep transplanted from Antelope Island. He was told they will not promote "put and take" hunting. Director Karpowitz said they are willing to partner with Parks to hold public meetings and discussions if hunting is considered. In the recommendations section of the RMP, it does state that hunting would be considered the last resort to the management of bighorn sheep. It was asked how "last resort" is determined. This would be up to the biologists on the island. Director Karpowitz said bighorn sheep don't wait for the last resort, they need to be managed along the way or it's too late.

The board would like to ensure that the RMP contains adequate futuristic visioning for the potential opportunities at Antelope Island. In order to do that, it is recommended that all team members be contacted to solicit their responses, review notes from the meetings, modify the plan and make sure appendixes are all referenced, convene a final meeting to review the RMP draft before presenting it to the board. Wendy will email the additional information to the board members as it is available. It was requested that this be completed so it can be presented at the June meeting.

Review of State Parks Fees

Deputy Director Mark Forbes reviewed the information included in the board packet regarding the Fee Review Team Status Report. Mr. Forbes is looking for confirmation that the Fee Review Team is going in the right direction. Chair Parson asked all board members to review the fee information that will be included in the next board packet very closely prior to the board meeting. He would like the team to explore a proposal such as surcharges that could be dedicated to maintenance in every park and attach it to the entrance fee that we can use as dedicated funds.

Upcoming Board Meeting

VICE-CHAIR KARL BENTLEY MADE A MOTION THAT THE STATE PARKS BOARD CONVENE INTO A CLOSED SESSION TO START THE NEXT BOARD MEETING FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSING REAL ESTATE AND CONTRACT STRATEGY AND LITIGATION ISSUES, PURSUANT TO THE CONTRACT EXEMPTION AT UTAH CODE ANNOTATED 52-4-5 (1A). MR. MARTY OTT SECONDED THE MOTION AND IT CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

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