

## Kanab Creek/Virgin River Watershed Council Organizing Meeting

### Attendees:

Mike Noel – Kane County Water District	Jane Whalen – Conserve Southwest Utah
Ed Bowler – WCWCD	Brock Belnap – WCWCD
Jeff Bradybaugh – Zion National Park	Candace Schaible - DWRe
Zach Renstrom – WCWCD	Dave Jessop – Virgin River Commissioner
Mac Hall – Hurricane Canal Company	Andy Rasmussen – Langdon Group
Steve Meisner – Virgin River Program	Dan Adams – Langdon Group
Scott Taylor – St. George City (Water Services Director)	Hollee Wood – Langdon Group
Josh Rasmussen – Fish and Wildlife Service	Carly Payne – DWRe
Elaine York – The Nature Conservancy	Leila Ahmadi – DWRe
Stacy Young – Southern Utah Home Builders Association	

### Meeting Notes:

- Question about representation from individual water rights holders – the individual person who pulls water out of a stream from their backyard – how is their voice heard?
  - They can be participants on this council as well
  - Could be added as a seat to the council – Individual property owner or water right holder
    - May be difficult for them to attend meetings such as this since they are not being paid by their work to attend them
    - Should try to include somebody who can represent these interests
      - For example, Bear River watershed council had 4 agricultural representatives to match geographic reach of council – this council can have the representation you feel is needed to create the right balance for the watershed
    - Could also have a seat specific for each county – and this could be filled by anybody within the county (could be a private property owner or somebody else who can speak to broader county interests)
    - After council discussion, council members agreed to add a seat for this interest
- Represent your interests but also bring any information you hear from others to this meeting
- Tourism is another big industry in the area
  - Council agreed to add tourism as an additional seat on the council
    - Council unanimously agreed
- Virgin River Program already exists – how are these intended to work together or are both really needed or what are the thoughts there? Is this council redundant to that effort?
  - The goal of these watershed councils is to decrease duplicative efforts and increase communication and collaboration amongst different groups that are involved with water
  - Communication and coordination with these already existing groups is crucial
  - Who could we include in this group that isn't involved with any already existing group? (Individuals or groups or interests)

- What have the other councils that have already been established been doing?
  - All these watershed councils are very new (established in April at the earliest). They are currently educating themselves on the resource and each other (council members) so they can be better informed about what the issues in their area are and what they want to tackle going forward
  - We recommend finding your “lane.” You will not be able to be everything to everyone, but you can find where gaps or holes are and fill those needs
- Will this group make projects getting done slower? Will they just add another step in the process that slows it down?
  - Due to the collaborative and consensus-building nature of this group – projects can be done much quicker because it has a diverse group of buy-in built in (less litigation and NEPA goes smoother)
- Intent of this group is to find the issues in a grassroots fashion and push that up to legislature

Interests:

<b>Agriculture</b> Mike Noel	<b>Industry</b> Stacy Young	<b>Indian Tribes</b> Travis Duran	<b>Public Water Suppliers</b> Scott Taylor
<b>Water Planning and Research Institutions</b> Zach Renstrom	<b>Water Quality</b> Brie Thompson	<b>Fish and Wildlife</b> Steve Meisner Jane Whalen	<b>Water Dependent Habitat and Environments</b> Elaine York
<b>Watershed Management</b> Dave Jessop	<b>Mutual Irrigation Companies</b> Mac Hall	<b>Local Sponsors of Reclamation Projects</b> Brock Belnap	<b>Private Property Rights</b> Ed Bowler
<b>Tourism</b> Jeanette Peatross Brittany McMichael	<b>Liaisons</b> Jeff Bradybaugh Josh Rasmussen Candace Schaible		

Recommendations for holes (orange in table above) – need to reach out these individuals:

- Water Quality – Brie Thompson
- Tribes – Travis Duran
- Tourism
  - Jeanette Peatross – Kane County tourism director
  - Brittany McMichael – Washington County tourism director
- Agencies – BLM, Forest Service,

Nominations for Officers:

- Chair
  - Dave Jessop

- Brock Belnap
- Vice Chair
  - Scott Taylor
- Representative to State Council
  - Mike Noel

#### Approved Nominations:

- Chair
  - Dave Jessop
- Vice Chair
  - Scott Taylor
- Representative to State Council
  - Mike Noel
    - Alternate: Mac Hall

#### Organizing Documents:

- Term lengths for council members need to be determined
  - Stagger between 2-year and 4-year terms
  - If nobody has a strong feeling towards serving for a specific length, term lengths can be determined randomly
- Electronic meetings are not required but are an option
- Meetings are required to be held at least quarterly, but can be more frequent
- There is not compensation from the state to participate on the council, but per diem and travel reimbursement are available to those who are not currently being paid by a governmental entity while performing their duties for the council
- Council discussion regarding if they are comfortable accepting organizing document template as if
  - Council approved unanimously to accept the organizing document template
    - Council will need to make edits to organizing document to be specific to this council (include names of council members, interest seats added, officers, etc...)
- Council will also need to draft Letter of Application
  - Will list council members and their interests, organizations, and term lengths

#### Next Steps:

- Next Statewide Utah Watersheds Council meeting: January 18, 2024, from 1 pm – 3 pm at DNR or via google meet
  - Documents need to be submitted to the council one week prior to this meeting
  - Chair and Statewide council representative will need to attend this meeting; other officers are recommended to attend
  - All council members are invited to attend

- Statewide Watersheds Council meetings are posted to their website here: [Utah Watersheds Council – Utah Division of Water Resources](#)
  - In-person: DNR office (1594 W North Temple St, Salt Lake City, UT 84116)
- Next Kanab Creek-Virgin River Watershed Council meeting: February 21<sup>st</sup> at 1pm at Washington County Water Conservancy District
- Potential future agenda items
  - Tour of Virgin River Diversion Dam
    - Or presentation if many have already toured it