

**MINUTES OF THE  
NATURAL RESOURCES, AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT  
INTERIM COMMITTEE**

Wednesday, July 21, 1999 - 2:00 p.m. - Room 303 State Capitol

**Members Present:**

Rep. Bradley T. Johnson, Cochair  
Sen. Howard C. Nielson, Cochair  
Sen. Joseph L. Hull  
Rep. Eli H. Anderson  
Rep. Melvin R. Brown  
Rep. Craig W. Butters  
Rep. David N. Cox  
Rep. Fred J. Fife, III  
Rep. James R. Gowans  
Rep. Tom Hatch  
Rep. Keele Johnson  
Rep. Evan L. Olsen  
Rep. Jordan Tanner  
Rep. Matt Throckmorton

**Members Excused:**

Sen. Leonard M. Blackham  
Sen. Beverly Ann Evans  
Sen. Millie M. Peterson  
Rep. Mary Carlson

**Members Absent:**

Rep. Bill Wright

**Staff Present:**

Ms. Constance C. Steffen,  
Research Analyst  
Ms. Jeanenne B. Larson,  
Associate General Counsel  
Ms. Joy L. Miller,  
Secretary

Note: A list of others present and a copy of materials distributed in the meeting are on file in the Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel.

**1. Committee Business -** Rep. Johnson called the meeting to order at 2:10 p.m.

**MOTION:** Rep. Throckmorton moved to approve the minutes of June 16, 1999. The motion passed unanimously.

**2. R.S. 2477 Mapping Program -** Mr. Dennis Goreham, Automated Geographic Reference Center, distributed information on the mapping program. He said that in the 1999 General Session the Legislature appropriated \$450,000 to the Automated Geographic Reference Center (AGRC) for a program to assist rural counties to inventory and map their R.S. 2477 rights-of-way. Twenty-one counties applied for the money totaling \$1.2 million in requests. All 21 counties received some funding. A minimum of \$10,000 was given to each county.

Mr. Joe Borgione, AGRC, gave a slide presentation on the program. The R.S. 2477 mapping program is among the projects AGRC is involved with to improve the data in the State Geographic Information Database (SGID) and make it available to the public. The mapping program utilizes Global Positioning System (GPS) technology which was developed for the Department of Defense but is widely used in civilian applications. Combining Geographic Information System (GIS) and GPS technologies provides a powerful tool to gather, document,

display, and subsequently analyze spatial data. He reviewed what several counties in the state have done with their share of the program monies. The AGRC has assisted the counties by providing training on data standards and mapping methodologies.

Mr. Bob Mathis, Wasatch County, stated obtaining GPS technology made it possible for them to develop a system that meets the needs of citizens and improves communication with other agencies. He commended the state for its encouragement of the proper use of GPS technology.

**3. Post-Olympics Maintenance and Operation of the Soldier Hollow Venue** - Mr. Dave Morrow, Division of Parks and Recreation, stated a team has been formed which has focused on making Soldier Hollow a successful post-Olympic site. They view the 2002 Olympics as a catalyst to reach the goals outlined in the Wasatch Mountain State Park master plan. It is their goal to provide recreational opportunities to local enthusiasts on a four-season basis. The site will also become a national training center for aspiring U.S. Olympians.

Mr. John Aalberg, Utah Nordic Alliance and former Olympic athlete, observed that the center would make Utah a world class ski destination which would attract national championship events. He said there is a large contingent of cross country and biathlon skiers in Utah and the Olympics will create even greater interest in nordic and biathlon events.

Mr. Lyle Nelson, United States Biathlon Association, explained that some of the factors that enabled him to be an Olympic athlete were great opportunities and a mentor in his hometown. There are a number of teams who are visiting Utah with the idea of moving here. That would allow for interaction between children and athletes.

Mr. Kevin Jardine, Soldier Hollow project manager, indicated development of Soldier Hollow began last fall with construction of a 5 kilometer loop ski trail. Recently, contracts have been awarded to complete the 23 kilometers of nordic ski trails and to develop a snowmaking system with the irrigation water that comes to the site. Contracts later will be awarded for the development of the shooting range and an 8,000 square foot competition management building.

Mr. Britt Mathwich, The Homestead, pointed out that possible post-Olympic sources of revenue at the site would include biathlon events; range rentals; cross-country skiing; and off-season activities such as mountain biking, rollerblading, and camping. He noted that there will be between 600-800 rooms for rent in the Midway area and a variety of restaurants and retail space.

Mr. McKay Edwards, cross-country skier, stated there needs to be a place for youth to witness the sport. He noted that cross country skiing is far more affordable than alpine skiing.

Mr. Robyn Pearson, Heber Valley Chamber of Commerce, said that since the venue is on a state park it will require unique solutions for long-term management. Their goal is to partner with the state, community, athletes, chambers of commerce, and others to make Soldier Hollow a successful post-Olympic site. They estimate there will be in excess of \$10 million spent on the venue just for the resources necessary to carry on the Olympics. There will be an additional \$10 million spent that the community has leveraged out of the taxpayers in Wasatch County.

Rep. Tanner commented that the issue of post-Olympic maintenance and operation of Olympic venues is much broader and complex than the management of Soldier Hollow. Post-Olympic operation of the luge and bobsled alone at the Winter Sports Park will cost hundreds of thousands of dollars. He said he is opposed to the state getting into a situation that will require annual appropriations to fund these facilities. The task force developed for the site should make specific proposals excluding state funding.

Mr. Kari Gibb, Wasatch County Courier, asked if it was the committee's recommendation to use the \$40 million legacy money to support private facilities, such as the Winter Sports Park, while asking the private sector to come up with funds to support Soldier Hollow, which is a state-owned facility.

Rep. Brown clarified that before the Soldier Hollow site was selected as an Olympic venue, the Legislature had directed that the legacy funds be used to support the Winter Sports Park and the speed skating oval. There is doubt whether the \$40 million will be sufficient to finance the operation and maintenance of those facilities.

Ms. Lucille Tuttle, Utah State Parks Board, noted that Utahns at all economic levels will be able to participate in activities at the site.

Ms. Reilly VanWagoner, property owner, said that she wants to know that the state is committed to helping Wasatch County create something that will last for generations.

Mr. Don Morgan, manager, Wasatch Mountain State Park, noted Soldier Hollow would provide new recreational opportunities to meet the needs of all the citizens of Utah.

Sen. Nielson thanked all those who participated in the presentation. He requested that Sen. Hull give a report of the tour he took of some of the parks in the state. He also asked Rep. Gowans to update the committee on the grasshopper and cricket infestation.

Sen. Hull explained there are areas that will require some work if they are to be kept as state parks. The Mountain Meadow Massacre site should no longer be tied to the Iron Mission

State Park. A closer facility should be given oversight of the area. Sen. Hull indicated the Sand Hollow site will be twice the size of Quail Creek. The state will have to supervise boating law enforcement on the reservoir and determine whether or not to accept it as a state park.

Rep. Gowans said USDA-APHIS has designated funds to be made available to counties to address the grasshopper infestation. He noted it is too late to handle the cricket infestation.

**4. Sensitive Species and Partners in Flight Lists and the Critical Habitat Program** -Mr. John Kimball, Division of Wildlife Resources, said that pursuant to state law directing them to protect, propagate, manage, conserve, and distribute protected wildlife throughout the state, the division has developed the Sensitive Species Program. He distributed a draft policy on sensitive species. He noted that if they can secure habitat for a species, they can secure the future for the species. They have been trying to determine the habitats associated with species in the state about which they have particular concern.

Mr. Kimball discussed Partners in Flight, which was established in 1990 to look at conservation strategies for avian species. The group considered all 450 avian species in Utah, ranked them, and is scheduled to release their report soon.

Mr. Bill James, Division of Wildlife Resources, explained there is an effort currently underway to identify critical wildlife habitat in the state. Information obtained will be shared with landowners, county commissioners, local governments, and the Legislature.

**MOTION:** Rep. Brown moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:05 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.