

Commission for the Stewardship of Public Lands

2018 Annual Report to the Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Environment Interim Committee

Items studied, and actions taken by the Commission for the Stewardship of Public Lands (the commission) during 2018 are summarized below. Additional details, including minutes of commission meetings, can be found on the commission's website.¹

Resource Management Plans

In the 2015 and 2016 General Sessions, the Legislature enacted and amended provisions related to county resource management plans, which provide for the protection, conservation, development, and managed use of resources that are critical to Utah citizens. The commission received progress reports during 2017 from the Public Lands Policy Coordinating Office (PLPCO). PLPCO helped counties create their respective plans and developed the statewide resource management plan.

By the end of 2017, all 29 counties had adopted a resource management plan and presented the plans to the commission. During 2018, PLPCO presented the completed statewide resource management plan to the commission and provided updates on the implementation of resource management plans and on additions or changes being made to plans.

Actions

- Adopted the "State of Utah Resource Management Plan" created by PLPCO.
- Recommended in concept 2018 General Session H.C.R. 10, Concurrent Resolution Approving the Statewide Resource Management Plan.
- Recommended in concept 2018 General Session H.B. 249, Statewide Resource Management Plan Adoption.

Public Lands Litigation

In December 2017, President Trump reduced the size of the Bears Ears and Grand Staircase Escalante National Monuments. The commission received updates during 2018 from members of Utah's federal delegation and the Attorney General regarding litigation related to the reduction of Utah's national monuments.

The commission also received updates from the Attorney General regarding litigation related to other public lands issues, including its efforts promoting the transfer of public lands to the state.

Actions

- Recommended that the Legislature pursue with all due haste any actions within the Legislature's power to move forward with litigation regarding the transfer of public lands to the state.

Emery County Public Land Management

In 2018, the commission studied public land management issues in Emery County, including the proposed Emery County Public Land Management Act of 2018, introduced in Congress by members of Utah's federal delegation. The commission heard from members of Utah's federal delegation, county representatives, and the Utah School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration.

Actions

- Held a two-day visit to Emery County to visit sites relevant to the public land management discussion, including the Cleveland-Lloyd Dinosaur Quarry, the Lila Canyon Mine, Goblin Valley, and the San Rafael Swell.

¹<https://le.utah.gov/asp/interim/Commit.asp?Year=2018&Com=SPESPL>