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November 20, 2014

Doug Smith, Wasatch County Planner
Wasatch County Planning Office
55 S 500 East
Heber, UT 84032

RE: Mountain Accord

Dear Doug,

I wanted to provide an update on the environmental system group for the Mountain Accord. As you know, the Mountain Accord is a collaborative public planning process designed to make long-term decisions and take action regarding transportation, environment, recreation and economy in Utah's Central Wasatch mountains and surrounding communities. Mountain Accord presents a valuable opportunity to protect, maintain, and improve the environment system of the Central Wasatch. The process and outcomes hopes to provide a platform to address threats, restore degraded areas, and protect resources by holistically evaluating and addressing environmental, recreation, transportation, and economic issues and goals.

I have had a chance to review the Mountain Accord's Idealized Environment System Narrative and Maps for the Environmental System Group. In the coming weeks these documents will be finalized. This information will be used to inform Co-Chairs and Executive Board members and assist in their decision-making over the next few months. The next step will be to balance these ideas to create scenarios and ultimately a preferred blueprint for the future of the Central Wasatch mountains.

My overall assessment as it relates to Wasatch County is that the County's existing ordinances, and specifically the special ordinances for the Jordanelle basin, already meet or exceed the proposed actions developed by Mountain Accord. For instance, the first action proposes preserving private lands while protecting private property rights. The intent is to limit development on sensitive lands. A sensitive lands analysis is one of the first analyses that a developer needs to complete when proposing development in Wasatch County. Other actions which are addressed with existing ordinances are protection of streams, mitigation of soils that have environmental concerns, and mitigation of invasive weeds.

A couple of areas that Wasatch County might want to address are:

1. Minimize climate change impacts through preparedness planning. This could be addressed by completing a climate change adaptation plan which would identify risks and vulnerabilities from climate change and identify mitigation measures.
2. Support transit/transportation choices for recreational users to facilitate access to mountain areas (i.e. Deer Valley, Mayflower, Jordanelle area). The goal would be to provide transit choices for recreational users that protect the environment by concentrating use (development) at appropriate locations within the County.
3. Increase attention to regional haze and support plans that address the reduction of haze and emission of air pollutants. Improvements in air quality would not only address environment and public health, but also improve visibility of beautiful Wasatch County.

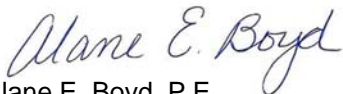
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A couple of proposed actions can be, and in many cases have already been supported directly by Provo River Watershed Council and/or the Council partners to help improve the environmental conditions within the County. These include:

1. Watershed restoration projects to help improve water quality, stream banks, and riparian ecosystem function. Many projects have been completed or are in the works that achieve these goals. It is imperative that the Council continue it's work in this area.
2. Identify restoration projects to remediate problematic soils that contribute to water and habitat degradation. There are a few areas within the Jordanelle Basin in close proximity to proposed and/or existing development that contain such soils. These areas are primarily on private lands. The Council should continue to provide support to the County to entice developers to complete appropriate remediation of such sites.
3. Support existing funding for land conservation and ongoing land stewardship. The partnership with the Wasatch Conservation District in the Wallsburg watershed is a great example of this type of program. The Council should continue to support these programs and provide funding for specific projects.
4. Develop ongoing monitoring and adaptive management plans. This is exactly the type of work the Council does with water, an important resource. The annual monitoring plan and report identify potential projects to improve and protect water quality. The program has been a great success for nearly 40 years. The data gathered and projects implemented are invaluable and have helped all of those involved in many and different ways. The annual program should continue to evolve to meet the needs of the partners.

I would be happy to make a report to the County in the future on the environment system group if you would like. Please let me know if you have questions.

Sincerely,



Alane E. Boyd, P.E.
Principal

Cc: Sandy Wingert, Division of Water Quality