Wildlife Refuge or ATV Park?

On May 29, 2003, the Department of Interior announced it was suspending designation of critical habitat for endangered species under the Endangered Species Act. Despite a 1995 National Academy of Sciences report that concluded habitat conservation “is absolutely crucial to species survival,” the Administration has not yet indicated how it will promote the recovery of imperiled plants and animals.

On April 11, 2003, the Administration agreed to settle a lawsuit with the State of Utah dropping protection for over 2 million acres of wilderness-quality lands in Utah. Interior Secretary Norton also agreed to forbid the BLM from even considering future wilderness resources in its planning process.

On April 9, 2003, the Administration signed a memorandum of understanding with Utah Governor Leavitt that will allow Utah to claim thousands of miles of highways across public lands. The memorandum ignores both law and precedent to allow the state to claim cow paths and jeep trails as highways even in areas...
TIMELINE OF BUSH’S ENVIRONMENTAL RECORD

Chapter ExCom Nominating Committee Seeks Candidates
by Brad Yates, Utah Chapter Conservation Chair

The nominating committee for Utah Chapter Sierra Club is currently seeking candidates for the 2003-2004 executive committee elections. Candidates need to be able to serve a two year term starting January 2004 through December 2006, attending bimonthly meetings (usually 4-5 hours on Saturdays) and attend to occasional urgent business via email or phone.

If you would like to become a candidate, apply to the Nominating Committee by sending your name, address, phone number and email to: Utah Chapter Sierra Club, ATTN: Nominating Committee, 2120 South 1300 East, Ste 204 Salt Lake City, UT 84106-3785. Or send the info by email to a member of the nominating committee. Please include a statement of your qualifications and how you would be able to help the Utah Chapter achieve its goals.

Candidate applications must be received by September 1, 2003. Candidates may also petition to appear on the ExCom ballot, contact a nominating committee member for more information. The Nominating Committee consists of:

Jean Binyon, binyon@sisna.com 435/259-1633
Brad Yates bnyslc@earthlink.net 801/521-4185
Claire Gardner ClaireGar@msn.com 801/583-1650
Midge Henline rosebud4tibet@hotmail.com 435/635-3610.

The Glen Canyon, Ogden and Salt Lake Groups will also be holding elections for their ExComs. For more information, contact current group officers to run for group Excoms.

Cover Photo: These motorcyclists on the Box Elder Creek trail probably don’t even know they’re breaking the law because the US Forest Service has never posted the route as closed.

Statement of Purpose

“To explore, enjoy, and protect the wild places of the earth; to practice and promote the responsible use of the earth’s ecosystems and resources; to educate and enlist humanity to protect and restore the quality of the natural and human environment and to use all lawful means to carry out these objectives.”
Notes from the Chair

by Jean Binyon

When Ivan Weber resigned as chapter chair in April, I left the vice-chair’s seat and assumed the duties of chair through the rest of this year. I want to express my thanks to Ivan for his leadership through 2002 and the first part of this year. He guided the Utah Chapter Executive Committee (ExCom) through some controversial issues and contentious meetings.

In our May meeting, former ExCom member Tracy Marafiote was chosen to complete Ivan’s term, and Al Herring agreed to be vice-chair as well as secretary. The chapter ExCom will continue our regular meeting schedule in July, September and November. These meetings will be: July 12 from 1:00 to 5:00 PM at the Sierra Club office; September 13 from 9:00 AM to noon in the Den at the Olpin Union Building on the University of Utah campus; and November 8 at a time and place to be announced.

In addition, in September an expanded Chapter ExCom will have a Strategic Planning Retreat in order to brainstorm and develop action plans in four areas:

* Approach conservation work strategically,
* Work together as club leaders,
* Involve people in activities, and
* Reach out to communicate the ideas and vision of the Club.

Our conservation priorities this year are: 1) protection of public lands, 2) air quality and energy issues, 3) nuclear waste storage and 4) water quality and conservation. We are almost three-quarters of the way through the two-year Conservation Plan which was developed in January 2002. Some problems such as Legacy Highway and nuclear waste which were identified then as emerging issues, have occupied a lot of our attention and resources. Through the Southwest Regional Conservation Committee (SWRCC) and Colorado River Task Force, our members are also engaged in developing strategies for National Sierra Club priorities such as the Colorado River system including Glen Canyon.

While we have active participation by ExCom members and by other Utah Sierra Club leaders, we need more. We need your involvement in conservation issues, participating in outings, leading outings, helping with political campaigns for candidates we have endorsed, and in many other ways. You will find a Call for Candidates in this issue. Consider running for the Chapter and Group ExComs. Contact members of the Nominating Committee and group chairs if you have questions about running.

TIMELINE OF ENVIRONMENTAL DESTRUCTION

Finally, I want to draw your attention to the timeline running along the bottom margin in this entire issue. Follow this timeline from the Bush Administration’s most recent attacks on the environment back to its first day in office. Although we don’t have enough space to include all the anti-environmental initiatives from the current congress and administration, it gives an idea of the scale of challenges we face to protect the environment.

“Every good thing, great and small, needs defense.” — John Muir

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March 2003

With wilderness qualities.

On March 10, 2003, the Administration exempted the oil and gas industry from storm water regulations. The EPA issued a rule giving the oil and gas industry a two-year exemption from compliance with new clean water regulations that require small construction sites to acquire permits for runoff pollution.

February 2003

February 8, 2003, the Administration approved 52 applications for exemptions, under the Clean Air Act and the Montreal Protocol, for methyl bromide. Methyl bromide, which accounts for 7 percent of depletion in the ozone layer, is an ozone-depleting substance used to sterilize the soil before planting and to kill pests in stored food products.

January 2003

Ozone, an ozone-depleting substance used to sterilize the soil before planting and to kill pests in stored food products.
Wilderness Refuge or ATV Park?

by Dan Schroeder, Ogden Group Chair

The sign at the trailhead read:

BRIGHAM WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA

Utah Division of Wildlife Resources
Federal Aid to Wildlife Restoration

Managed with Sportsmen’s Dollars to Protect and improve Wildlife Habitat

Two bullet holes also adorned the sign. Behind the sign was a kiosk displaying a map of the Brigham Refuge and adjacent national forest, showing roads and trails where you could ride an all-terrain vehicle. A box offered copies of the map to carry with you during your excursion.

Occupying the Wasatch Front immediately southeast of Brigham City, the 4,400-acre Brigham Refuge is intended to “protect and improve” valuable wildlife habitat. It includes both winter range along the Bonneville shoreline and higher country such as Balsam Basin and 8,200-foot Perry Peak. Like many of Utah’s other Wildlife Management Areas, it augments adjacent habitat on federally owned land—in this case the Willard roadless area of the Wasatch-Cache National Forest.

Yet with Brigham City and the rest of the Wasatch Front so nearby, it is virtually inevitable that the Brigham Refuge is now being managed more for human recreation than for wildlife habitat. The roads and trails within the refuge, originally created by miners and ranchers, have been adopted by off-highway vehicle enthusiasts and extended into an ever-expanding network (see map). Brigham City and Box Elder County have endorsed ATV access to the refuge, and the Utah Division of Parks and Recreation is proposing to promote ATV use here (and in two other state wildlife management areas) as part of the Shoshone Trail system.

The Division of Wildlife Resources (DWR), which manages the refuge, is only beginning to come to terms with the reality of motorized recreation. Everyone seems to agree that motorized use should be permitted only on a few designated routes, at most. New fences block off some of the badly eroded hill-climb areas near the trailheads. Gates attempt to block access to the entire refuge from January 1 through April 30. The maps on the kiosks show only the major routes, omitting many others that are presumably considered closed. Yet there are still plenty of routes around the fences and gates, while no signs or barriers mark the closed routes in the higher country.

STEEP TRAILS AND NO SIGNS

Our Sierra Club outing group visited the Brigham Refuge on the Saturday of Memorial Day weekend. After studying the map on the kiosk, we followed the designated jeep trail up Dunn’s Canyon. The trail was in fair condition but soon settled into a steep 20% grade. On this unseasonably warm day we paused each time we reached the patches of shade created by occasional clumps of maples.
For most of its length, both sides of the trail were lined with dyer’s woad—Northern Utah’s most notorious noxious weed. Weeds often invade natural areas along the corridors created by roads and trails, and vehicle traffic accelerates the dispersion of seeds. We tried uprooting some dyer’s woad, but the ground had already been hardened by weeks of dry weather.

After a two-mile climb we reached a saddle with a four-way junction. To the north and east were unsigned trails that showed signs of recent use despite their omission from the map. Preliminary maps of the Shoshone Trail system actually show one of these routes instead of the jeep road that we had followed. That alternate route is extremely steep and unsuitable for vehicle use, yet there has been no attempt to block it off at either end.

The continuation of our route, and of the proposed Shoshone Trail, lay to our right (south). Soon we found ourselves ascending a 30% grade on a very badly eroded trail. Loose rocks made traction difficult even on foot; we had trouble imagining vehicles using this route. Much of the trail was divided into multiple braided tracks, probably created as riders lost control or left the trail to get better traction. Near the top, where a bit of snow remained, glacier lilies grew in the middle of the path.

Finally, after climbing a thousand vertical feet from the saddle, the trail leveled off at our destination: Balsam Basin. A meadow stretched before us toward a small fir forest. The trail became a faint, overgrown two-track. While enjoying our lunch at this spot, we wondered what the future held for this area. Would Brigham City and the state parks department carry out their plan actively to promote ATV use here? Would the steep trail be “improved” to permit safer vehicle access? Would there be any way to keep motorists on the designated route, or would Balsam Basin and the surrounding high country be overrun by riders and drivers looking for new adventures and secluded campsites?

A VIEW FROM THE FOREST

Two days later, on Memorial Day, I drove around to Dock Flat and hiked into the Brigham Refuge via the national forest on the east. The first portion of this trail makes a gradual ascent along Box Elder Creek. Numerous ghost trails branch off to either side, many leading to or from dispersed campsites. I saw six ATVs and two motorcycles traveling here during my hike. As the trail began climbing toward Perry Peak and Balsam Basin, however, the traffic disappeared. Like the route from the north, this portion of the trail was in very poor condition with grades exceeding 30%.

According to the Ogden Ranger District’s published travel maps, all national forest lands west of the Willard Basin road have been closed to motorized use for at least a dozen years. Yet forest service personnel admit that they have always managed the Box Elder Creek trail as open. When Box Elder County published a map that incorrectly showed the trail as open, and DWR copied the error onto the maps posted on its kiosks, nobody at the Forest Service objected.

This summer, the Ogden Ranger District will begin the formal process of revising its travel plan. The district ranger has made no secret of his desire to make

**November 2002**

On November 25, 2002, the Administration proposed new regulations to weaken salmon protections in order to increase logging in the Pacific Northwest. The main reason for changing the rules is to free public lands in the Northwest
Due to its overly steep 30% grade, the ATV trail leading to Balsam Basin has become badly eroded and braided into multiple paths.

legal the de facto motorized use of the proposed Shoshone route between Brigham City and Dock Flat. His stated reason, often repeated by other public officials, is that if you give the ATVs a place to go, then the creation and use of illegal ghost trails will decrease. Of course, ATVs already have plenty of places to go: the Ogden Ranger District alone offers 150 miles of roads and trails that are open to off-highway vehicles.

SOLUTIONS?
There are ways to prevent ecological damage caused by off-highway vehicles, but opening even more routes is not one of them. Obvious first steps would be to distribute accurate maps and post unambiguous signs. Fences and other physical barriers can sometimes block off closed routes, but experience shows that riders will pioneer new routes around barriers wherever the terrain permits. Therefore the forest service and the State of Utah need to get serious about law enforcement. Vehicles need to display license tags that are legible from a distance, and the state should set up a toll-free phone number to report violations, as has been done in the San Rafael Swell. Penalties for violations need to be strengthened to include larger fines and impoundment of vehicles.

Naturally, none of these things will happen if nobody speaks up. If you care about preserving wildlife habitat and natural places in Utah, please become an advocate for stricter controls on motorized recreation. Contact local officials. Write a letter to the editor. Educate your friends and neighbors. Visit an area where off-highway vehicle problems are occurring, then work locally to get the problems solved. It's all too easy to find such areas.

Ogden Group Chair Dan Schroeder can be reached at 801-393-4603, or at dschroeder@weber.edu.

[Editor’s note: The Ogden Group outings schedule includes a hike to Fox Elder Creek and Perry Peak on Saturday, September 27.]

Wilderness Adopters: Help Is Needed
by Al Herring, Utah Chapter Vice-chair

Utah wilderness is under attack from the Machiavellian agreement signed April 11 between the State of Utah and the Department of Interior that stripped interim wilderness protection from 2.6 million acres of BLM land in Utah and from RS 2477 road claims which are being developed by the counties. As a consequence, making sure that the Utah Chapter Adopt-A-Wilderness Program is active and effective has become even more important. You can help in one of two ways.

First, if you are already an Adopter, we would like to hear from you. We want to make sure that our data on current Adopters is accurate and complete, and we especially want to get e-mail addresses so that we can improve communications in the most timely and cost-effective manner.

Second, if you are not yet a Wilderness Adopter but would like to learn more about the program or become and Adopter, we are also eager to hear from you. We especially need people who reside near the Wilderness Study Area they want to adopt and who can be actively involved in monitoring the area and working with the appropriate BLM office.

So, if you are a current Utah Wilderness Adopter or want to become one, please contact either Mark Clemens at the chapter office (801/467-9297 or mark.clemens@sierraclub.org) or Al Herring at his home (801/444-9474 or al.mary.herring@att.net). For more information on the Adopt-A-Wilderness Program, visit the chapter website at www.utah.sierraclub.org/ and check the “environmental issues” link.

from court rulings that require the Bureau of Land Management and the Forest Service to show that timber sales will not harm fish.

Also on November 1, 2002, the Administration made sure that no progress was made on international efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions at the eighth conference of the parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

The Administration worked to strip out all references to the ratification of the Kyoto Protocol and renewable energy in the final declaration text, and did not seek commitments from developing countries to stabilize and reduce emissions.

On November 1, 2002, a U.S. District Court rejected the Administration’s plan to allow oil exploration, seismic testing and
If anything knits together Ann Wechsler’s interests in the environment, it might be Utah’s mountains. On any weekend day, Ann might be hiking in the Wasatch or Uinta Mountains or huddled indoors with other environmental activists working on comments to thwart the seemingly unquenchable ambitions of ski resorts and real estate developers.

Ann prefers working closely with other conservation organizations to stem unnecessary development. She has served as co-chair of Save Our Canyons, and confers with the Wasatch Mountain Club and Utah Waters frequently. Much of the work is tedious, behind-the-scenes committee service and document review, but there is always camaraderie among environmental activists. “It’s what keeps us going,” she says.

When she does get outdoors an especially welcome snowshoe trip or hike is to Little Dell Creek east of Salt Lake City. “It’s amazingly untrammeled watershed and wildlife habitat a few minutes from downtown with none of the ‘no trespassing’ signs that one might find in other state watersheds”, Ann says. The fact that it remains pristine today is due in large part to the role she played when the Salt Lake Organizing Committee targeted it for the biathlon and cross-country events for the 2002 Winter Games. Ann continues, “It was a snow job; they tried to tell us they would ‘leave no trace’, like a Barnum and Bailey Circus that picks up its tent and moves on. But we knew there would be trails wider than the Millcreek Canyon road, separate waxing huts for all the countries, and more than 20,000 visitors for each event.” Ann and others sought a venue that could accommodate such intrusions, and ultimately, Soldier Hollow became TV’s poster child for the Olympics and a favorite of the athletes.

Ann’s continuing loyalty to the Sierra Club is based on a desire to see these unique mountains and canyons remain the sanctuary that city residents deserve, and that wildlife must inherit. “Before moving here, the only climbing I did was on the stairways of New York City’s apartment buildings. The opportunities for quiet recreation that the mountains and deserts afford here are astounding, but dwindling. That’s why we see so much passion surrounding environmental issues. So my advice is, just hang in there like pistons. It makes a difference.”

Ann Wechsler's Mountains
by Mark Clemens

October 2002

drilling across 20,000 acres near Arches and Canyonland National Parks in Utah.

On October 25, 2002, the EPA Inspector General issued a report stating that the Administration denied funding this year for cleanup work at 56 high priority toxic waste sites in 25 states despite warnings from regional officials that the sites continue to pose serious environmental health risks. For twenty-two years, the Superfund program has been based on the “polluter pays” principle that made it possible to clean up hundreds of the worst toxic waste dumps across the country. The Administration has shifted the cleanup costs from industry to taxpayers by refusing to reinstate the Superfund tax.

On October 9, 2002, the Administration filed a brief in U.S.
The long-held practice of supporting actions vehicle rule last year. This authority in revising its zero emissions vehicle rule last year. This is a significant departure from the federal government’s long-held practice of supporting circumstances vehicle rule last year. This

The Nine Mile-Gate Canyon road was constructed in the early 20th century by an African-American cavalry who also left a record of themselves, painted with axle grease on the walls of Gate and Nine Mile Canyons.

Butch Cassidy and the Wild Bunch found the Nine Mile-Gate Canyon road to be a lucrative place to do their business because, at that time, payroll was transported to Fort Duchesne from the trains in Price by coach. This was a major freight route between the trains in Carbon County and the Uintah Basin to the north.

Today, Nine Mile Canyon provides a seemingly endless cache of information for archaeologists, paleontologists and historians. It is a favorite place for school classes and tourists to get a feel for the old West and to peer into the thoughts of the canyon’s prehistoric residents. It is still a place where one can escape the rush and smog of the city, to find the solitude and comfort of the wilderness—where one can search the soul and mend the spirit.

Perhaps the president needs to look at what his energy policy is doing to undermine his Preserve America initiative. In keeping step with one of the Interior Department’s top priorities—the issuing of oil, gas and mining permits quickly and with minimal public scrutiny—the Price Field Office of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM-PFO) released an environmental assessment (EA) entitled “Bill Barrett Corporation (BBC) - Seven Well Exploration Program” in early May. Their proposal is to drill seven exploratory gas wells in Nine Mile Canyon and its tributaries. In a public forum letter published in the Salt Lake Tribune (March 22, 2003 - “Chicken Little Logic”), Jim Felton of BBC stated, “Bill Barrett Corp. has proposed no wells in Nine Mile Canyon.” How’s that? These well permit applications were submitted to the BLM in February 2002!

To complicate matters, the public comment period expires on June 13, 2003. The EA was only recently posted (http://www.ut.blm.gov/pricefo/seven/) for general

Circuit Court charging that California impinged on federal authority in revising its zero-emissions vehicle rule last year. This action is a significant departure from the federal government’s long-held practice of supporting California’s efforts to clean up its air. Under California clean air rules, ten percent of the vehicles sold between 2003 to 2008 must be electric or zero-emission vehicles. The state, recognizing that the automobile companies were not ready to meet that goal, offered to let companies sell hybrid vehicles, which run on gasoline and electrically, to satisfy part of the requirement.

On September 27, 2002, the Administration announced that an open-pit gold mine could move forward on Native American tribal land in California. The area is considered sacred land by the Quechan Indian tribe. This action
public review, and Patrick Gubbins, Manager-BLM-PFO is planning to release a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). Gubbins states, “BLM has determined that no significant impacts would occur as a result of the implementation of this project and that an environmental impact statement (EIS) is not required.” Say What?!

Several prehistoric cultural sites lay adjacent to and perhaps even under BBC’s proposed drill pad sites. Old growth logging and oil and gas exploration on the Tavaputs Plateau is already bringing twenty or more heavy and oversized trucks across the dusty canyon roads daily. The Seven Well project and BBC’s proposed Stone Cabin Seismic Testing project would add dozens more each day. Diesel smoke, dust and traffic vibration are directly responsible for the accelerating destruction of the canyon’s treasured rock art and ruins. It has also become a harrowing trip for the family to venture into the canyon in their minivan on the extremely truck-rutted road.

Nine Mile Canyon and its tributaries are a pre-cious and special public asset that should not be compromised by allowing extractive industries to operate therein. To comment on BBC’s Seven Well Exploration Program and the Stone Cabin Seismic Exploration Project write to:

Mr. Patrick Gubbins
Bureau of Land Management Price Field Office
125 South 600 West
Price, UT 84501

Please also send a copy to

Nine Mile Canyon Coalition
ATTN: Bill Walsh, Chair
P.O. Box 402
Price, UT 84501

Utah’s Hogle Zoo invites you to its first Predator Awareness Day scheduled for Saturday, July 19th from 10 am until 3 pm. We will have many local and national wildlife and conservation groups present at information booths around the zoo. Activities for the kids, scheduled feedings, and Meet-a-Keeper programs on predators mean all age groups will find interesting activities and displays.

The programs help people learn about predators, especially species that are found in and near Utah. Predators, such as bears and cougars, are sometimes misunderstood and feared. In some cases these magnificent predators are removed from areas or destroyed—not because they were causing problems—but simply because they were spotted near human development. Recognizing that education can prevent nuisance animal incidents and other conflicts with predators, we decided to hold this special event. We will show people how to identify predatory species, how to observe them safely, explain why predators are beneficial to an environment and how to avoid conflict with preda-tors.

Through outreach programs, classes, signs, animal exhibit design and events such as this, Utah’s Hogle Zoo strives to inform our patrons about wildlife and the environment and how they can make a difference.

Hogle Zoo has a wide collection of predatory species to discover. You can see wolves, black bears, cougar, bobcat, snakes, raptors, tigers, tarantulas, crocodiles, and much more. We design our animal enclosures to mimic natural surround-ings as much as possible. We also provide animals with enrichment items such as novelty food treats, climbing structures, manipulative “toys” like plastic balls, cardboard boxes etc, and different scents. By doing this, the animal is more comfortable and will show natural behaviors. Predators in captivity still have all their wild instincts. Watching predators react to enrichment gives you an insight on how they behave in the wild.

The two cougars, Monty and Anna, are great fun to watch and learn from. On occasion they are given a life-size pinata deer, painted to look like the real thing. It is stuffed with meat and sometimes sprinkled with their favorite scent, allspice. Once the cats spot the ‘deer’ they stalk it and ‘kill’ it by leaping onto the back and biting the neck, just as the cat would do in the wild. Once the deer is ‘dead’ both cats tear into the belly and eat the meat treats. By the next day the pinata is reduced to tiny bits of paper and is buried or cached as wild cougars do.

Join us for our Predator Awareness Day and learn through our zoo ambassadors how important pred-ators are.
Note To Participants:
All members and nonmembers are welcome on any of the chapter or group activities listed. Radios, firearms and dogs are not welcome on Sierra Club outings. Unless otherwise noted in the description, outings are not suitable for children. Interested participants are strongly encouraged to contact the outing leader in advance and inquire as to updates, degree of difficulty, and other outing details. Participants should be prepared for various seasonal weather conditions, temperature changes that occur due to rapid increases/decreases in altitude, and bring enough food, water, and appropriate clothing for given outing. Outing leaders reserve the right to turn away anyone who appears unprepared for scheduled outings. Please note that all participants, or their legal guardians, must sign a waiver, recognizing the possibility of injury, to participate in each outing. Call the Sierra Club office (801) 467-9297 for a recorded message on forthcoming activities.

Also, it must be noted that, although a very effective way of reducing air pollution and fossil fuel consumption, the Sierra Club cannot recommend carpooling as a safe means of transportation. If you choose to carpool, fees charged by the US Forest Service are expected to be shared by participants carpooling to trailheads. For the most current and updated outings listings, please visit the website http://utah.sierraclub.org and look at the outings under the Salt Lake and Ogden Groups and the new Southwestern Utah Conservation Committee!

Salt Lake Group

Family Outings E-Mail List

To anyone interested in participating in a family outing e-mail list. The list is intended to serve as an electronic communiqué for interested parties to post and respond to family oriented activities. Communications of suggested and planned outings between parties will be carried out exclusively via the e-mail list. The list is intended to accommodate both planned and impromptu outings. Contact Kurt Alloway at desertquest99@yahoo.com for more information about posting to the list.

August 2002

to allow oil and gas companies to expand drilling beyond the boundaries of the ancient National Monument in Colorado. The area has the highest density of archaeological sites in the U.S. Approximately 85 percent of the monument is already leased for energy development. This is the first time drilling has been permitted to extend outside leased areas at a national monument. On August 21, 2002, a U.S. District Court temporarily stopped the oil drilling at the monument due to the irreparable harm that could be caused.

July 2002

On July 15, 2002, the Administration approved a Navy plan to use low-frequency sonar to detect submarines, despite evidence of injuries to whales and dolphins. The permit exempts the Navy from the Marine Mammal Protection Act, allowing it to harm whales, and other species while
Family Night Outing
Kite Flying on the Great Salt Lake
Get your kids and come fly a kite with Kurt Alloway along the shores of the Great Salt Lake. Expect gentle winds with just enough gusto to lift a kite into clear blue skies above the beach. E-mail Kurt at desertquest99@yahoo.com for more information about date, time, and other details about the outing. Refer to the paragraph above regarding a variety of family-oriented outings, communication of which will be carried out exclusively by e-mail.

JULY
Tuesday Night Hike, July 1st
Ferguson Canyon Hike
This is a traditional favorite for Tuesday night hikers. The hike will explore the foothill area just south of the mouth of Big Cottonwood Canyon. Bring a flashlight along with water and hiking gear. Meeting place is the Park and Ride at the mouth of Big Cottonwood Canyon at 6:30 p.m. Call Larry Schoeff (944-0945) for details about the outing. Refreshments will be served after the hike at the Schoeff residence.

Saturday, July 5th
Thurston Peak Hike
This will be the fourth annual trek on the Great Western Trail from Francis Peak (9547’). To car pool from Francis Peak, meet at 9:00 a.m. at the north east parking area at the Davis County Office Building on State Highway 106 in Farmington City. Call trail leader Ron Younger (292-4040) or Mike Morrison (475-4845) for additional information regarding the outing. Co-listed with the Ogden Group.

Tuesday Night Hike, July 8th
Twin Lakes Hike
Take a break from the city heat and enjoy an intermediate-level hike on the Twin Lakes trail near the Brighton Ski Resort in Big Cottonwood Canyon. Destination will be Dog Lake and the wildflowers should still be in bloom. Meeting place is the Park and Ride at the mouth of Big Cottonwood Canyon at 6:30 p.m. Call Bill (582-9223) for more information about the hike.

Tuesday Night Hike, July 15th
Days Fork Hike
Enjoy a sampling of the allure of the Wasatch Front on this intermediate-level hike in Big Cottonwood Canyon. Be prepared for intermittent steep terrain along the way. Meeting place is the park and ride at the mouth of Big Cottonwood Canyon at 6:30 p.m. Call Dick (531-7830) for details regarding the hike.

Sunday, July 20th
Wild Flower Hike in American Fork Canyon
Although the exact hiking trail has not been determined, the hike will explore the Silver Lake area in American Fork Canyon. Expect intermediate-level hiking, and learn about abundant wildflowers. Bring lunch and water in preparation for an all day excursion. Meeting time is scheduled for 9:00 a.m. Please call Margaret (292-7602) in advance for meeting place and other details regarding the hike.

Tuesday Night Hike, July 22nd
Greens Basin
Ann Wechsler will lead you through a forested trail, from the Days Fork trailhead in Big Cottonwood Canyon. Greens Basin is the secluded meadow, 1 3/4 miles up above Silver Fork, with an elevation gain of 1.050 feet. Meet at the Big Cottonwood Canyon Park’n Ride at 72nd South. Bring a flashlight, rain gear, and appropriate footwear. Call 585-3296 (daytime phone) if you have questions.

Tuesday Night Hike, July 29th
Scott’s Peak
This hike takes you to Scott’s Peak on the Big Cottonwood - Park City ridge. The peak combines good views of the Wasatch and distant Uintas with a rather short approach. The trip involves some moderate and some steep grades. The last part of the trip is off-trail and steep. Flat-soled shoes are not acceptable for this hike. Bring a jacket as it can be windy on the summit. Meet at the Big Cottonwood Park ‘N Ride. For more information contact Bill Van Moorhem, 582-9223.

AUGUST
Sunday, August 3rd
Island Lake Hike
Get away from city heat and traffic and enjoy a moderately paced hike exploring the Uinta Mountains. The destination is Island Lake and the trail passes several other small lakes along the way. Experience the alpine grandeur that led the Wasatch-Cache National Forest to recommend this area for wilderness preservation in the recently-released forest plan. Round trip distance is about 6 miles. The trailhead is approximately 55 miles driving distance from Salt Lake City just above the Trial Lake Campground area. Meeting place is at the eastern section of the K-Mart parking lot at 8:30 am. Call Ken (484-3112) for information regarding the hike.

Tuesday Night Hike, August 5th
Great Western Trail Hike
Discover why this section of the Great Western Trail is a favorite of the leader. The trail winds through patches of wildflowers, pine and oak stands, and provides the possibility of encounters with wildlife. The trail begins at the Big Mountain summit parking just off the highway leading to East Canyon. Meeting place is the east part of the K-

TIMELINE OF BUSH’S ENVIRONMENTAL RECORD

2000, Navy sonar tests resulted in the death of 23 whales in the Bahamas.

On July 2, 2002, the Administration proposed to weaken federal oversight of Clean Water Act rules and allow states to clean up rivers, lakes and streams. The proposal would reverse a Clinton Administration rule requiring EPA approval of states’ efforts to restore impaired water bodies. The Clinton Administration rule was in response to lawsuits in 34 states that claimed that officials failed to enforce the Clean Water Act. Today, according to the EPA, 44 percent of the nation’s water bodies are still impaired by pollutants.
Mart parking lot on Foothill Drive at 6:30 p.m. Call Ken (484-3112) for details about the hike.

**Tuesday Night Hike, August 12th Catherines Pass Hike**
This is an intermediate-level hike on a trail leading to Catherines Pass and Sunset Peak via Albion Basin in Little Cottonwood Canyon. A good time to escape the city heat and enjoy Albion Basin wildflowers. Meeting place is the Little Cottonwood park and ride at the mouth of Little Cottonwood Canyon at 6:30 p.m. Call Dick (531-7830) for more information about the hike.

**Sunday, August 17th Hike In The Uintas**
Explore some of the most pristine alpine country in the state on a Uinta Mountain hiking trail. Although the exact trail has not been chosen, the trek will be on an intermediate level trail some where in the Uintas. Be prepared for an all day hike with lunch and plenty of water. Scheduled meeting time is 9:00 a.m. Please call Margaret (292-7602) in advance for meeting place and other details about the hike.

**Tuesday Night Hike, August 19 Mt. Aire**
Mt. Aire is a traditional Tuesday night hike, but it takes a fast group to make the summit this late in the season. The peak is on the ridge between Mill Creek Canyon and Parley’s Canyon. If the summit looks unreasonable to the leader, the group will just go to the pass west of the summit. Meet at the Skyline High School parking lot, 3251 E 3760 S. There is a fee involved for entering Mill Creek Canyon where we will begin the hike. For more information contact Bill Van Moorhem at 582-9223.

**Tuesday Night Hike, August 26th Foothills Above Hogle Zoo**
This will be a moderately easy hike along paths in the foothills just above Hogle Zoo. Although some of the trail is popular for mountain bikes, the leader intends to hike on trails that are less frequented by bikers. Meeting place is the Rotary Glen parking lot across the street (east side) from the Hogle Zoo parking lot at 6:30 pm. Call Ken (484 3112) for more information about the outing.

**SEPTEMBER**

**Tuesday Night Hike, September 2nd Little Dell Hike**
This is an easy hike on the Little Dell Reservoir trail just below East Canyon. Meet at the east section of the Parleys Way K-Mart parking lot at 6:30 pm. Call Ann 585-3296 (daytime phone) if you have questions.

**Saturday, September 6th Sugar Pine Creek**
This is a co-listing with the Ogden group. Refer to the Ogden outings for details about this hike. Call Ron Younger (292 4040) for information.

**Tuesday Night Hike, September 9th Little Mountain**
The Little Mountain summit is at the head of Emigration Canyon and to the north of where the Emigration Canyon - Little Dell road goes over the ridge. The summit provides views down Emigration Canyon and toward the higher peaks to the north, east and south. The final ascent to the summit is steep and on a rather vague trail. Flat-soled shoes are not acceptable for this hike. I suggest a jacket and a flashlight for a trip this late in the season. Meet at Rotary Glen, just to the east of Hogle Zoo at the mouth of Emigration Canyon. For more information contact Bill Van Moorhem, 582-9223.

**Sunday Hike, September 14th Lookout Peak**
Lookout peak is between City Creek Canyon and Emigration Canyon near the head of Emigration Canyon. This trip climbs significantly and is an advanced day hike. Participants should wear hiking shoes or boots (without flat soles), and bring water, lunch, a wind jacket and/or rain gear. Scheduled meeting place is Rotary Glen, just to the east of Hogle Zoo at the mouth of Emigration Canyon, for a 9:00 am departure. Interested participants must RSVP to the outings leader prior to the hike date due to changes that may be made regarding date and time of outing. Contact Bill Van Moorhem, 582-9223.

**Sunday Hike, September 21st Mueller Park in Bountiful**
This hike will begin in North Canyon and end in Mueller Park in the picturesque foothills above Bountiful City. Expect an easy/intermediate level trek and bring enough lunch and water for an all day hike. Meeting place will be the K-Mart parking lot just off exit 320. Call Margaret in advance (292 7602) for meeting time and more information about the hike.

**Sunday, September 28th Goshutes Mountain Hawk Watch**
Take advantage of pleasant fall weather and enjoy an unique opportunity to view the graceful flight of hawks in the little traveled west desert. Because this is a Wilderness Study Area, the number of hikers will be limited to 13 and must RSVP to trip leader Dick prior to the hike. Meeting place will be the Department of Natural Resources Building at 1590 West North Temple at 8:30 am sharp. Please RSVP to Dick (531 7831) and to receive more infor-

**June 2002**

On June 3, 2002, the Administration issued the United States Climate Action Report for 2002. The report states: “greenhouse gases are accumulating in the Earth’s atmosphere as a result of human activities, causing global mean surface air temperature and subsurface ocean temperature to rise.” Despite its recognition of the link between human activities and global climate change, and its detailed listing of the alarming consequences of climate change, the Administration suggests that little or nothing can be done to reduce emissions and, therefore, that the United States should merely “adapt” to climate change. On June 6, 2002, President Bush dismissed the report saying, “I read the report put out by the bureaucracy.”
mation about the outing.

OCTOBER

Sunday, October 5th
Middle Fork of the Ogden River
This is a co-listing with the Ogden group. Refer to the write up for the Ogden group outings. Call Ron Younger (292 4040) for information.

Sunday, October 12th
Onaqui Wild Horse Refuge Outing
An intermediate but off-trail hike in the Onaqui Wild Horse Refuge. The area is one quadrant west of Faust (Highway 36) and north of the Pony Express Trail road. Most likely this adventure will be in the southern end of the quadrant just north of the trail but I may find something more exciting in the meantime. There are poorly-maintained roads but no hiking trails that I know of at this point. Natural history goes with the territory naturally; we may see golden eagles, falcons, kestrels, harriers, and pronghorns, but no wild horses in the southern area. The views are magnificent if you are willing to climb. Wear hiking boots and bring walking sticks. Call or email Ann O’Connell for more information and meeting spots at 801-277-9046, or oconnell@xmission.com.

Sunday, October 19th
Antelope Island Hike
The hunting season will just be beginning in the canyons along the Wasatch Front, but not on Antelope Island. The trip leader has several hiking possibilities in mind including treks to Frary Peak or Elephant Rock as well as other locations on the island. Expect an intermediate to advanced level hike and bring enough food and water for an all-day hike. Meeting place is at the East causeway entrance to the island at 10:00 am. Call Dick (531 7830) for more information about the hike.

NOVEMBER

Sunday, November 2nd
Lake Side Mountains Hike
This outing will offer hikers an opportunity to explore the Jedediah Mountain Range on the west side of the Great Salt Lake. Although a dirt road leads to the hiking area, there are no marked trails, but there are plenty of spectacular views and desert ambiance. Bring enough food and water for an all-day hike and expect intermediate level hiking terrain. Meeting place is the Department of Natural Resources parking lot at 1590 West and North Temple at 9:00 am sharp. Call Dick (531 7830) for more information about the hike.

Ogden Group

For information related to outings in general, contact Mike Morrison at 475-4845, or ex46driver@networld.com. For membership information, contact Suzanne Storer, 479-5035.

Ratings: 1-easy; 2-moderate, 3-good fitness required; 4-demanding

A note from Mike Morrison: I’m hoping to organize some outings to Red Rock Country and other neat destinations within, let’s say, a 400-500 mile radius of Ogden. I’ll consider any destinations and any dates up, until Late Spring, 2004. All events will be official Sierra Club Outings and will be moderate in difficulty. Possible destinations are: the San Rafael Swell area; the Escalante, the Virgin River Gorge; etc. Be advised that map-recons and people’s recommendations will often be the extent of my knowledge of the areas involved. We’ll publish updated

May 2002

On May 21, 2002, the Administration announced plans to open approximately one million acres of mining in southwest Oregon. In January 2001, the Clinton Administration issued a mining moratorium on one million acres of Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management lands in the Siskiyou region. The Siskiyou region in Oregon is one of the most diverse ecological regions in the nation. The area contains 15 Wild and Scenic Rivers and some of the best remaining free flowing salmon and steelhead trout habitat in the U.S.

April 2002

On April 24, 2002, the Administration proposed management plans that would weaken protections for 17 national monuments created by the Clinton Administration. The Department of the Interior proposes to establish a regional or local management board for each national monument and increase oil and gas develop-
outings listings on the Group website, http://utah.sierraclub.org/ogden/, as soon as I know what I’m doing. So, if you’re up to an “adventure”, call me, (801) 475-4845, with your suggestions or to be put on the will-call list.

JULY

Saturday, 5th, Thurston Peak
Ron will show us wild flowers (be prepared for pop quizzes.), alpine lakes, and maybe the remnants of snow drifts. We’ll get great views of the valleys to the East and West of the Wasatch. Call Ron, 801-292-4040, or Mike Morrison, 475-4845 for details.

Sunday, 13th, Willard Basin, Willard Peak, 2
We’ll drive to Black Mountain from Mantua, then hike the ridge line. While enroute, we’ll be inspecting and documenting ORV damage and such. Meet 9AM. Leader, Mike Morrison, 801-475-4845.

Saturday 19th, Mount Naomi Wilderness trek, 3-4
We’ll hike to Mount Naomi from Tony’s Grove in Logan canyon, through a gorgeous, wilderness area filled with wild flowers. This is about a 9 mile hike, of about 4 hours. Meet 7AM at the Smith’s in North Ogden. Leader, Larry and Chris Woolsey, 801-731-3701.

AUGUST

Saturday, 16th, Taylor Canyon area, 3
Springs, o’d railroad pipes, etc. Learn about the history and other aspects of the area. Meet 8am at the 29th St trail head. Call Larry & Chris Woolsey, 731-3701 for details.

Sunday, 17th, Bike Rails to Trails, 2-3
Take a bike ride into Utah’s past. We’ll start in the Echo area and head for Park City on one of many trails that started out as a train track. Meet, 7AM. Leader, Al Stockland, 801-479-9597. Call for details.

SEPTEMBER

Saturday, 6th, Sugar Pine, in the Monte Cristo Area, 2-3
We’ll hike down Sugar Pine Creek & come out Peggy Hollow. We’ll also be inspecting the condition of this inventoried roadless area, re ORV’s and grazing. Plan on being at the Huntsville Chevron strip mall at 9:30. Bring water and snacks. Leaders: Ron Younger, 801-292-4040 & Mike Morrison, 475-4845.

Weekend of the 13th, Sulphur Creek Trail in Capitol Reef National Park, 3
Spend the night in a really neat camp ground (camp, car camp or wimp-out in a motel) in Torrey. There’ll be some scrambling & walking in a small stream on this 5-6 mile hike. There’s a waterfall slide that’d fit in any south-seas islands movie as well. Leaders, Larry & Chris Woolsey, 801-731-3701. Call for details.

Weekend of the 20th, Backpack the Deep Creek Mountains WSA, 3-4
Meet Friday pm or early Saturday at the WSA. We’ll do a backpack (spend the night in the boonies!) into the heart of the range to explore the WSA as well as inspecting and documenting ORV damage and such. Call Al & Mary call for details, 801-444-9574.

Saturday, 27th, Perry Peak via Box Elder Creek, 3.
Enjoy fall colors and spectacular views on this 10-mile hike starting near Mantua. Should this area be opened to ATVs? The Forest Service says yes; come decide for yourself. We’ll meet in Ogden at 8:30, or at the trailhead at 9:15. Call leader Dan Schroeder (801-393-4603) for details.

OCTOBER

Sunday, 5th, Middle Fork of the Ogden River, 2-3
This is part of a Wildlife Preserve that’s a popular area for the pack horse people as well. The leaders, Ron Younger (292-4040) and Mike Morrison (475-4845) hike it almost every Fall. The horsemen usually go for the steeper climbs while we laze along the drainage. Meet 9 am.

Saturday, 11th, Bike Promontory Peninsula, 3
We’ll go somewhat SE of Golden Spike State Park for this 4-5 hour ride. It’s all on pavement, with very little traffic. Bring lunch. Meet, 8:30, Ogden High School. Call leader, Susan Matt, for more info, 801-540-3725.

Saturday, 18th, Frary Peak on Antelope Island, 3-4
Let’s climb the highest peak on the island. There’s a good chance we’ll see mountain sheep and/or antelope. Meet 9AM. Leaders, Larry & Chris Woolsey, 731-3701.

Saturday, 25th, Skyline Trail - the whole enchilada, 3-4
We’ll start at the North Ogden Divide and go up-and-over, ending up at Pineview Reservoir, near Ogden Canyon. The first 2 miles are up-hill; the remainder mostly downhill. Meet, 9AM at Rainbow Gardens parking lot. If it rains, forget it! Leader, John Besbekos, 985-6854.

April 2002

On April 5, 2002, the Administration urged the removal of Robert Watson, who advocated action to curb greenhouse gas emissions, as chairman of the United Nation’s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). In 2001, the ExxonMobil

TIMELINE OF BUSH’S ENVIRONMENTAL RECORD
It’s All Downhill! A Major Slide for the ski Industry

By Ann Wechsler, Salt Lake Group Conservation Chair

The ski industry, which boomed in the decades following World War II, has been virtually stagnant since 1980. Had it remained so, our local mountains might have stayed relatively unsprawled. Instead the industry got ambitious, and mountains devoted to the sport became destination resorts. In the Wasatch Range, we had locally-owned resorts catering to local populations (I remember when Solitude offered a $5.00 weekday ticket to women); some are now owned by the largest resort developers in North America.

One of the largest is Intrawest, which owns Solitude Mountain Resort. Another is Vail Resorts. A few years back, the third, American Skiing Company, bought Wolf Mountain, formerly Park West, and renamed it The Canyons. In just five years, they spent $55 million on mountain improvements, and more than $20 million on roads and sewer lines in preparation for hundreds of hotel rooms and homes. Now, having completed just 7% of the development proposed in its master plan, approved by Summit County, The Canyons is scaling back. The real estate boom has busted.

What could this mean for Wasatch resorts? Take Solitude, for example. Mike Gorrell reported in the Salt Lake Tribune on March 1st that Intrawest Corp created two companies, Leisura Developments U.S. and Leisura Developments Canada, designed to “improve Intrawest’s competitive edge against its two main North American rivals, Vail Resorts Inc. and American Skiing Co.” The company CEO claimed that Intrawest was marketing to people in their early 50s, “who have money to spend and want a second home at a resort.” For now, Solitude is spared further development because its Eagle Springs condos are complete. Intrawest will be focusing on its nine other resorts.

American Skiing Co. (The Canyons) recently underwent major restructuring to stem their losses. This restructuring included the sale of one of their holdings—Steamboat Springs, CO—yet we still hear from them that the future is bright. This refrain has become a familiar dirge from companies on the brink of collapse.

The resorts market to skiers who are on the slopes for, at most, five hours a day. At destination resorts, patrons have time on their hands; they want restaurants, shops, entertainment and nightlife. Big and Little Cottonwood Canyon leisure companies aren’t counting on just winter recreationists. They market the canyons year round—to the brunch crowd, helicopter picnickers, even movie goers who will find a theatre in Dick Bass’s approved three-story, 50,000-square-foot, glass structure atop Hidden Peak (the lighting of which will be visible all the way to Nevada, making it just a little less hidden).

Another marketing tool we have seen more of lately, and one particularly aimed at planning commissions, is the promise of “public benefits” such as trail development, pockets of open space, housing for employees, public transit, and landscaping along access roads. Snow sheds have long been touted for Little Cottonwood Canyon to prevent frequent closing of the narrow road from avalanches, which impede travel to the growing town of Alta and Albion Basin homeowners.

If the Wasatch Range is to have a bright future for Utahns, and retain its wildlife and wilderness, it must have defenders. There is an ever-increasing need for active conservationists who must continue to face the peddlers of urban sprawl in the canyons. Many are already working with the agencies that are entrusted with stewardship of these mountains and water-sheds. Anyone can assist by joining the Utah Chapter of the Sierra Club (on-line at http://utah.sierraclub.org/join_volunteer.asp) and helping to preserve OUR heritage—for our families, for our future.
A Massive New Highway On Zion’s Doorstep

by Nina Dougherty and Mark Clemens

potential Locations

The Utah Department of Transportation has issued a draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) for a new highway called the Southern Corridor. The highway would run for between 20 to 26 miles (depending on the alternative chosen) between a new interchange on I-15 south of Bloomington and State Route 9 on the west side of Hurricane. The highway will allow and in fact induce new low-density sprawl development from Bloomington continuously to Hurricane. Air quality, open space and wildlife, not to mention endangered plant species, will all suffer. To view the environmental impact statement on line, go to http://www.udot.utah.gov/scc.

The area for which the freeway is proposed is not just anywhere in the United States. It is, after all, the corridor leading up to one of the world’s most beautiful and inspiring parks. The DEIS describes the problems for road building caused by the colorful buttes, mesas, canyons and ridges in southern Utah County; the DEIS calls them “physical constraints.” Instead of physical constraints, we see fascinating, colorful geological features and fragile soils with significant plant populations. We believe that the people who have moved to St George do it for the climate and the beauty of the area. Washington County has a wonderful opportunity before the expected overwhelming population onslaught to steer the growth in such a way that the beauty of the area is preserved and residential growth and access for all of the population, including senior citizens, is provided in the friendliest, least pollutant and water and energy consumptive manner.

SMART GROWTH OR SPRAWL? Although the DEIS includes a section on smart growth, this project is tiered to the expectation that Washington County will not use any smart growth planning. In fact, the DEIS acknowledges no impact from public transportation—not even in the year 2030!

Although the DEIS makes an admirable argument for smart growth, all the build alternatives will in fact promote low-density, leapfrog developments while increasing the value of state lands, and private lands belonging to a cozy group of multi-millionaire land speculators. Among the disadvantages of the sprawl alternatives promoted by this DEIS are 43% higher carbon dioxide emissions, 49% higher public infrastructure costs and 35% higher water consumption than if smart growth was actively implemented. [Southern Corridor Draft EIS, p. 6-14, March 14, 2003]

Development in Washington County is already characterized by low-density developments, some of them miles away from services. This pattern requires every journey to be by car, encourages excessive water use, costs more to provide municipal services and gobbles up land. The Southern Corridor highway would intensify and speed up all those problems. The DEIS acknowledges this. “It is expected that the area around the interchanges would develop by about 2010 compared to 2020 under the No-Build Alternative.” [Southern Corridor Draft EIS, p 4-1, March 14, 2003]

BULLDOZING BEARCLAW POPPIES This project would also have devastating impacts on three endangered plant species. These plants have experienced serious habitat loss through development, drought and habitat degradation from off-road vehicles. This highway could be the death knell for the plants whose numbers are already down seriously before the project.

The plants, Holmgren’s milkvetch, Dwarf bearclaw poppy and Siler’s pincushion cactus, are dependent on unusual soil types or specific, rare bees to pollinate them. They can’t simply be transplanted to other places; they can only live in specific habitats. The Center for Plant Conservation has some interesting background on the Dwarf bearclaw poppy—sometimes described as Utah’s most endangered plant—at http://ridgwaydb.mobot.org/cpweb/CPC_ViewProfile.asp?CPCNum=205.

MOR E INFORMATION PLEASE Perhaps the greatest weakness of the DEIS is its inadequate analysis. Under the law, the proponents of a major federal action such as this are required to study a meaningful range of alternatives. Instead this DEIS studies three nearly identical build alternatives and a no-build alternative. Virtually the only difference among the three alternatives studied is the point at which they terminate on State Route 9 west of Hurricane. The middle alternative is 1.1 miles from the east alternative and 1.3 miles from the west alternative. The analysis does not therefore provide citizens and policy makers with real choices.

The very simple traffic model used in this study was calibrated using 1994 data—before the current

February 2002

On February 25, 2002, the Department of the Interior appeals office halted an oil and gas exploration project on federal lands between Arches and Canyonlands National Parks in Utah that could cause irreparable harm. The exploration activities include the cable and heavy-duty thumper trucks to conduct seismic testing. On February 5, 2002, the Administration approved the oil drilling project over objections from park rangers and scientists.

On February 4, 2002, the Administration proposed to cut 200 employees from the EPA enforcement office in the Fiscal Year 2003 budget. Some pollution enforcement activities would be shifted from federal authorities to state officials, who would have less ability to curb pollution that crosses state lines. The Administration attempted to cut the enforcement budget last year, but the funds were restored by Congress.

TIMELINE OF BUSH’S ENVIRONMENTAL RECORD
bus system was implemented in St. George. They then project these data through 2030-by which time St. George’s population will have nearly tripled-and assumed transit will have no quantifi-
able impact even then. The assumptions on tran-
sit need to be changed and a seriously enhanced transit system, with all the things that make it work, examined. We are also dealing with a large senior citizen population in the St. George area. This population may be more interested in transit use than younger people. Assumption of a well-
used, much-enhanced transit system would cer-
tainly change the presumed need for the pro-
posed freeway.

Many new projects sponsored by the federal gov-
ernment are being proposed in Washington Coun-
ty: a new airport, new or enhanced inter-
changes on I-15 and the Southern Corridor. There is even talk of a major new road to the northwest of I-15 that would take off from the same new interchange that would serve the Southern Corridor. The current environmental impact statement needs to reflect the cumulative environmental impacts of all these projects, not just the Southern Corridor in isolation.

CONCLUSION
The DEIS needs to build on the excellent informa-
tion that it provides on smart growth by turning it into one of the alternatives considered. Beefed up with robust implementation of transit, the smart growth alternative would help Washington County become both more efficient and more habitable without the need to build a new highway.

TAKE ACTION
The deadline for public comments on this project is July 11, 2003. Please take a moment to write a letter or send an e-mail message today to Gregory Punske at the Federal Highway Administration. The address is below.

FHWA Utah Division
ATTN: Gregory Punske
2520 West 4700 South, Ste 9A
Salt Lake City UT 84118

If you prefer to send an e-mail message, the address is nicole.donegan@hdrinc.com. Log on to the Utah Chapter’s website http://utah.sierra-
club.org for more information, links and a sample e-mail message that you can send on the Southern Corridor.

Thank You to Our Generous Contributors!

We thank these contributors to our 2003 annual fund drive and all our other contributors who prefer to remain anony-
mous. For anyone still planning to contribute to this year’s fund drive, we’ll be happy to list your name-if that’s your preference-in the Spring 2004 Utah Sierran. To protect our members’ privacy, if no publishing preference is specified, we do not publish contributors’ names. If you don’t see your name listed and would like for it to be published, please call Mark at (801) 467-9297. Please accept our apologies if we misspelled your name!

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Jean Anne Waterstradt
Gertrude K. West and the West Family
Robert Roemer and Irene Terry
Richard Woolsey
Bradley N. Yates
Ken Zenger

On January 14, 2002, the Administration relaxed the Army Corps of Engineers’ regulations protecting wetlands, making it easier for developers to build on lands that are wet for only part of the year. Wetlands are important in preventing floods, cleaning water of pollutants, and sheltering fish and wildlife. Backing away from the decade-old commitment of no net loss of wetlands, the Administration also changed regu-
lations to create a “nationwide permit” that allows developers to begin construction more quickly and with fewer limitations.

On January 4, 2002, the Administration ordered the Interior Department field offices to expede permit application for oil and gas exploration. The Administration issued a memoran-
dum stating “Utah needs to ensure that existing staff under-
stand that when an oil and gas
Legislative Final Report on General Session

by Steve Erickson,
Utah Chapter Lobbyist

Veteran observers of the Utah Legislature consider the just concluded 2003 General Session one of the most difficult and contentious in recent memory, but for environmental interests and concerns, it verged on downright hostile.

Legislators chopped budgets for environmental monitoring and wildlife resources, eschewed renewable energy in favor of new coal-fired generation, killed recycling bills, and dumped the biggest, most controversial issues, relegating them to future study. They even trashed a non-binding resolution encouraging local governments to consider how to dim nighttime light pollution.

Referring to a citation honoring Magnesium Corporation of Utah, Jason Groenwald of Families Against Incinerator Risk told The Deseret News, “they honor the polluter and spurn the conservationist.”

The most vigorously argued and perhaps most important environmental issues of the session centered on radioactive waste regulation and tax policies. Sixteen separate bills and resolutions were filed though only four were debated. After several votes, the house defeated H.B. 237 (Rep. Kory Holdaway) that would have banned disposal of Class B and C radioactive wastesóhotter wastes than currently accepted in the state. The nuclear waste dump Envirocire has sought to dispose of these more profitable streams of waste for years. Instead, legislators opted for a two-year study of the matter (S.B. 172-Hazardous Waste Regulation and Taxation Policy Task Force). Likewise, a bill to charge permit fees to transporters of high level nuclear waste through the state was relegated to interim study. The Hazardous Waste Regulation and Tax Policy Task Force meets monthly. Schedules and agendas are available on the legislative web site, http://www.le.state.ut.us/asp/interim/Commit.asp?Year=2003&Com=TSKHW R.

Fortunately, a bill (H.B. 366) to direct the state trust lands administration to study storing spent nuclear fuel rods on state landsódubbed by critics “Plan B from Outer Space” received ignominious burial.

Taxes on low-level radioactive wastes were raised, but only after Envirocare lobbyists managed to have the proposed tax hike slashed in half. Competitor International Uranium Corporation (IUC) got off light on the tax increase, but at least legislators are finally aware of its existence. Fees raised under this legislation (H.B. 286, Rep. David Ure) will bolster the DEQ’s Environmental Restricted Fund for environmental monitoring of solid, hazardous, and radioactive wastes, and will help support the stateís impending move to primacy over uranium mill tailings and IUC.

The fund will also get a boost from the passage of SB 186 (Sen. Bill Wright) that requires commercial waste facilities (like ECDC) receiving only construction and demolition waste to pay a fee. Fees were also increased to support clean up of leaking underground storage tanks. Air quality monitoring didnít fare as well because budget cuts will force the DEQ to mothball 11 monitoring stations.

Other air quality measures were a mixed bag of progress and retrogression. The good news was the defeat of H.B. 125 (Rep. Chad Bennion), which would have required legislative approval of regional plans to clean up the haze over the Grand Canyon and other critical areas in southern Utah and the Four Corners. Another hurdle to clean air, particularly given the extensive consultation already solicited for these plans, is unnecessary and could hinder their implementation. It also could have caused long delays in meeting EPA standards for air quality in urban Utah. On the downside, legislators overwhelmingly approved S.B. 21 (Sen. Leonard Blackham) that helps clear the way for approval of an additional 950-megawatt, coal-fired generating unit at the massive Intermountain Power Plant near Delta, Utah.

Renewable energy got short shrift, as H.B. 89 (Rep. Jim Gowans) was hijacked by industry interests and never received a hearing. This legislation, which conservationists have spent two years crafting and promoting, would have boosted wind power and other clean alternatives. It will be studied yet again in the interim. H.B. 153 (Rep. Ralph Becker), that would have helped curb energy use in schools, received a similar fate.

Once again, the legislature couldnít resist more symbolic and unhelpful shots on the rural roads controversy. H.B. 274 (Rep. Mike Noel) loosens the definition of a right of way across federal public land under the stateís interpretation of the repealed federal law RS 2477. It canít alter federal supremacy, however, and will likely face legal challenges. Similarly, a resolution requiring legislative approval before the feds can designate a Wild and Scenic River in Utah will have little influence on outcomes.

The other road issue of importance worked out better. Negotiators from the Sierra Club, Utahns for Better Transportation, and Salt Lake City Corporation convinced legislators on the final day of the session to release $2.4 million in sales taxes paid by city residents that were held hostage as punishment for the successful lawsuits against the Legacy Highway.

Perhaps the actions not taken on recycling best epitomized legislative attitudes toward the environment. Legislators canned S.B. 248 (Sen. Gene Davis), the Bottle and Can Deposit Requirements bill, without a hearing. And a measure to encourage recycling of old computers and other electronic devices (H.B. 67, Rep. Ralph Becker) was junked.

Clearly, conservationists will continue to fight an uphill battle on Capitol Hill for some time to come. Until the next general session, weíll have to content ourselves with influencing task forces on radioactive waste, energy policy, and the impacts of gravel pits.
The One Club Year

by Ann Wechsler, Salt Lake Group Conservation Chair

In the mid-1990s, the national Sierra Club’s Board of Directors sought to reunite conservation with outings and the One Club project materialized into a national initiative. The program became a model for chapters and groups to build teams to achieve the goals the club specifies in its mission statement, which always bears repeating:

To explore, enjoy, and protect the wild places of the earth; to practice and promote the responsible use of the earth’s ecosystems and resources; to educate and enlist humanity to protect and restore the quality of the natural and human environment and to use all lawful means to carry out these objectives.

The Utah Chapter has now completed its pilot project as a One Club grant recipient. One year seems barely long enough to get started, and we wish we had another with the grant money provided. The focus now is on sustaining the program.

The Salt Lake and Ogden Groups directed their conservation education, not on the wilder, remote places, but on the accessible hinterlands of our urban areas - the front range of the Wasatch, arguably the most urbanized corridor in the nation. Outing leaders scheduled hikes in the city’s foothills, the forests, the watersheds, the west desert, and riverine corridors, all of which face unrelenting development pressures. Even the designated wilderness of the Wasatch Range faces intrusion by county road claims, flight paths over pristine forests to Salt Lake City’s expanded airport, and an aggressive recreation industry. The canyons themselves, Salt Lake County’s de facto parkland, are sprouting condos rather than wildflowers.

Salt Lake Chapter outing leaders endeavor to provide rewarding and cheerful experiences on all hikes. We welcome people of all abilities, and sincerely hope that those who return time after time will consider leading others into the outdoors. We also welcome anyone who has an interest in a particular issue to become more involved. We will support all to further our common goals - it’s the least we can do, for our families, for our future.

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Support artistic cinema in Salt Lake City by becoming a member of the Salt Lake Film Society!

Receive benefits like:

- Complimentary admissions at the Tower Theatre and Broadway Centre Cinemas
- Complimentary rentals from the Tower’s VHS and DVD archives
- Admissions to members-only sneak preview screenings of upcoming Film Society programs
- Admissions to two members-only Sundance Film Festival screenings

The Salt Lake Film Society would like to encourage film loving locals to become contributing members. Not only will your contribution entitle you to the benefits of membership; it will enable you to support the Salt Lake Film Society’s expanding programming and historic restoration efforts. All contributions made to the Salt Lake Film Society, a nonprofit arts organisation, are tax-deductible.

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### Executive Committee Members or Officers 2003

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