



Bear Lake Regional Commission

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Minutes

Bear Lake Regional Commission

Garden City, UT

July 26, 2023

Those in attendance:

Bradley Jensen - Board Chairman, Bear Lake County Commissioner
Sim Weston - Board Vice Chairman, Rich County Commissioner
Dan Fisher, City Council of Montpelier
Mike Leonhardt - Mayor of Garden City
Roy Bunderson- Mayor of Bloomington
Ron Jensen - Recreation
Ken Brown - Rich County at Large
Mitch Poulsen - Executive Director- Bear Lake Regional Commission
Christy Jensen - Bear Lake Regional Commission
Tami Leonhardt - B L Convention & Visitors Bureau

Excused: Albert Johnson - Bear Lake County at Large
Burdette Weston - Board Secretary Mayor of Laketown

Also in attendance: Emily Wright-Bear Lake Fisheries Biologist
Mark Scadden-Bear Lake Watch

Chairman Bradley Jensen conducted the July 26, 2023, meeting of the Bear Lake Regional Commission, the meeting started at 7:11pm.

Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Jensen asked for an approval of the agenda, The agenda was reviewed, and approved.

- **Mike Leonhardt motioned to approve the agenda.**
Sim Weston seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Emily Wright/ Bear Lake Fisheries Biologist

Emily Wright is the new Fisheries Biologist for Bear Lake. She replaces Scott Tolentino as he has retired. She has a bachelor's degree in wildlife and fisheries management from Utah State University. She is about to finish her graduate degree in fisheries science. She has worked under Scott for the last four years and will now take over for him. Bryce Nelson is also sharing his knowledge and experience of the lake and with her. The long-term data that has been collected is somewhat unique as most places don't have biologists that have been around as long as those who have worked at Bear Lake.

The flooding and unusual weather conditions of 2023 have created a very abnormal spring for fisheries. Due to these conditions, she was not able to run the cutthroat fish trap on Swan Creek.

This year they will be using a brood stock for eggs that come from Swan Creek so they will be all Bear Lake Cutthroat Trout eggs. They usually stock in early May but due to excessive ice on the Marina, they were taken down to North Beach and by the inlets because it was the only open water.

Last year the regulation on hatchery fish was taken away and you can keep any two trout. Instead of fin clipping we are marking the hatchery fish with grip mark. In the hatchery the fish are sprayed with a fluorescent grip that stays under their scales. When they are caught in the gill net or the spawning

traps, she will be able to identify them with a black light to know if they are hatchery fish or naturally recruited. The cutthroat population is thriving, and they want people to feel free to take more out to eat. Emily showed pictures of fish caught with spring gill net sampling which was done about a month late due to ice. These very large Lake Trout were then returned into the lake.

Gill net surveys show population, what the fish are eating at different depths, and where the fish are hanging out at different times of the year. Next week she will start the summer gill netting survey.

Hydro acoustic Cisco sampling was done last week, numbers on that testing are not completed yet. The Cisco numbers have been at a twenty plus year low at 2.3 million due to predation. The goal for Cisco is between 3 to 4 million.

The natural recruitment of cutthroat has gone way up because of habitat restoration projects on all the different tributaries. So, they will stock less of both the Lake Trout and Cutthroat for 3 to 5 years to see if the Cisco numbers come up. They are stocking 107,000 cutthroats, 21,000 Lake Trout. The survival rate of stocked trout into Bear Lake is thought to be approximately 40%.

Staff Report

- Mitch showed the board graphed summary information from stream discharge measuring on Swan Creek, Saint Charles Creek, Fish Haven Creek, and Big Creek. This long-term data set is being shared with all the different agencies, Emily and the DEQ's of both States, and the USGS. This is helping the USGS with their measurements of evaporation on Bear Lake.
- Two rounds of E.coli measuring have been done this year and the tests have been way below the threshold of 209 mpn, unlike some high run off years when those levels have been elevated.
- New ordinances on both sides of the state line are being worked on. Bear Lake is developing a short-term rental ordinance and Rich County is working on an alternative energy ordinance.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes were reviewed and approved.

- **Ron Jensen made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 28 meeting.**
Ken Brown seconded the motion, motion carried (Roy abstained as he was not in attendance)

Bills & Payroll

The bills and payroll for the Bear Lake Regional Commission were reviewed, a motion was made to approve them.

- **Sim Weston made a motion to accept and approve payment of the July 2023 bills and payroll for the Bear Lake Regional Commission**
Roy Bunderson seconded the motion, motion carried.

Adjourn

With no further business, the meeting ended at 7:55 p.m.

- **Ken Brown motioned to adjourn the meeting of the Bear Lake Regional Commission**
Dan Fisher seconded the motion, motion carried.

Minutes Approved:


Chairman


Date