



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Historic Mountain Accord officially signed

*With unanimous approval by executive committee,
signing ceremony moves the Accord into next phase*

Cottonwood Heights, Utah (Aug. 3, 2015) — Mountain Accord, a historic agreement 30 years in the making, was signed today by Gov. Gary Herbert and members of the [Executive Committee](#) in shadow of the Cottonwood Canyons.

“The Central Wasatch is important for all of Utah,” Herbert said. “[Mountain Accord] is a comprehensive and significant document that gives us a blueprint to accommodate the challenges we face as a fast-growing state.”

The signing event represented the culmination of two years’ worth of public feedback, stakeholder involvement and leadership decisions. Salt Lake Mayor Ralph Becker lauded the consensus-based process that brought many groups to the table from government agencies, environmental and recreational advocacy groups and ski resort and private landholders.

“The Central Wasatch Mountains tower above the valley and are a constant reminder of our stewardship over these resources,” Becker said. “Our quality of life and prosperity are dependent on this mountain range. We have, through Mountain Accord, a once-in-a-lifetime chance to come to a common understanding about what the future should bear.”

Now approved, the Mountain Accord will enter Phase 2, which includes significant research into each recommendation, continued public feedback and completing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) as part of the required NEPA, National Environmental Policy Act, process. The Mountain Accord represents the culminating commitment of more than 20 organizations who, through a voluntary, multi-year, public, consensus-based planning process agree to proceed with a suite of proposals designed to ensure that future generations can enjoy all the activities we do today, while preserving our watershed and natural environment.

“The Mountain Accord is a model process for future decision making,” Salt Lake County Mayor Ben McAdams said. “We are making generational decisions here and coming forward with the Mountain Accord we have a road map that represents our plans, hopes and vision for protecting the Wasatch, our water and the land that gives so much life in our region.”

The Accord is intended to influence future, local, regional and statewide planning and to initiate efforts to enact meaningful protections and preservations for the Central Wasatch. Important highlights of the Accord include:

—A Federal Land Designation that will lock down ski area boundaries

The Accord proposes to petition the U.S. Congress to create “A National Conservation and Recreation Area” in the Central Wasatch. The federal land designation will specifically prohibit expansion of ski areas onto public lands beyond the resort area boundaries. The ski areas are in support of the land designation, and are willingly agreeing to this preservation package.

—A major conversion of private to public lands

A series of proposed land exchanges among the US Forest Service and ski areas, primarily in established base areas, will clean up the map and organize the piecemeal mess of land ownership in the Central Wasatch. This will enable better decisions and planning in the future.

—Transportation solutions

The signers of the Accord recommend considering alternatives that dis-incentivize single occupancy vehicle use in the Cottonwood Canyons. Incentivizing transit solutions for the I-80 Corridor will also be examined.

—Environmental monitoring

The Accord proposes the creation of an environmental monitoring “scorecard” to give decision makers a way to track the Central Wasatch’s environmental health and evaluate impacts in future planning discussions.

—Trail improvements

The Accord proposes an effort to clean up and organize the trails system in our canyons, to control erosion and protect the watershed.

—Utah County jurisdiction underscored

Previous language detailing the proposed land exchange that involved acreage in Utah County’s American Fork Canyon was deleted from the Accord. The Executive Board agreed to respect Utah County’s jurisdiction in the matter and are not taking a position on the land proposal as it relates to Utah County.

The public is invited to visit MountainAccord.com and sign the Accord, learn more about its proposals and get involved as the Accord moves into Phase 2, which asks the US Forest Service to consider several land exchange proposals as part of a formal public process consistent with federal environmental policy and state, county, and local planning ordinances.

Visit www.mountainaccord.com for more information.

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