



SAVE OUR CANYONS

Growth

- ❖ 1970 - Salt Lake County Population = 45,500
 - ❖ Wasatch Cache National Forest Visits = 2.6 million
- ❖ 2018 - Salt Lake County Population = 1.14 million
 - ❖ Uinta Wasatch Cache Forest Visits = 10 million
 - ❖ Central Wasatch SL Ranger = ~6 million visits



Visitation Comparison

Land Unit	Acreage	Visitation (annual)
Central Wasatch Unit - UWCNF	80,000	6 million
Arches National Park	77,000	1.65 million
Teton National Park	310,000	3.5 million
Yosemite National Park	749,000	4.01 million
Yellowstone National Park	2.22 million	4.12 million
Zion National Park	146,600	4.32 million
Grand Canyon	1.217 million	6.38 million

Approximately \$0.30 / visitor

Visitation Stats

Figure 1: Summary of Tri-Canyon Usage

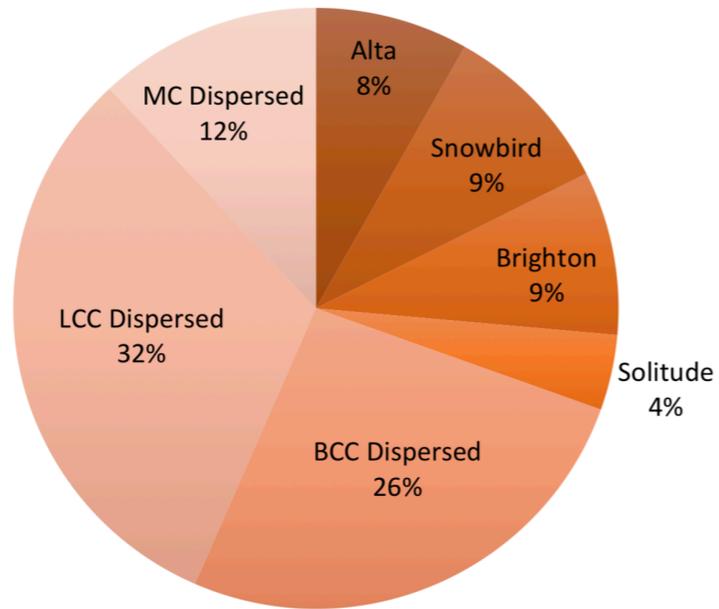


Figure 2: Percentage of Use by Canyon

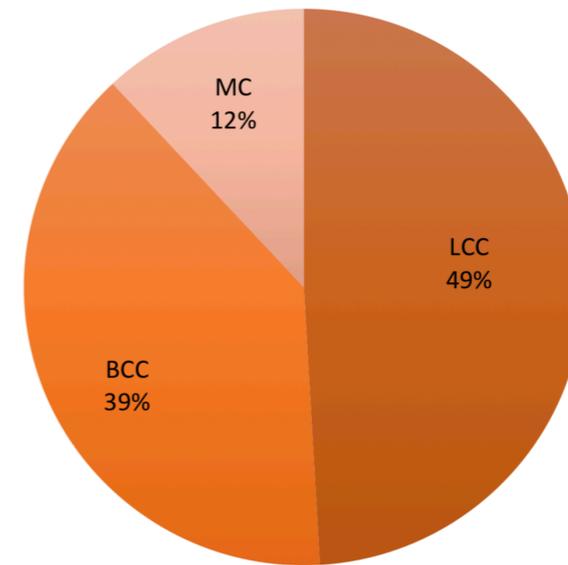


Figure 3: Percent of Dispersed and Resort Use

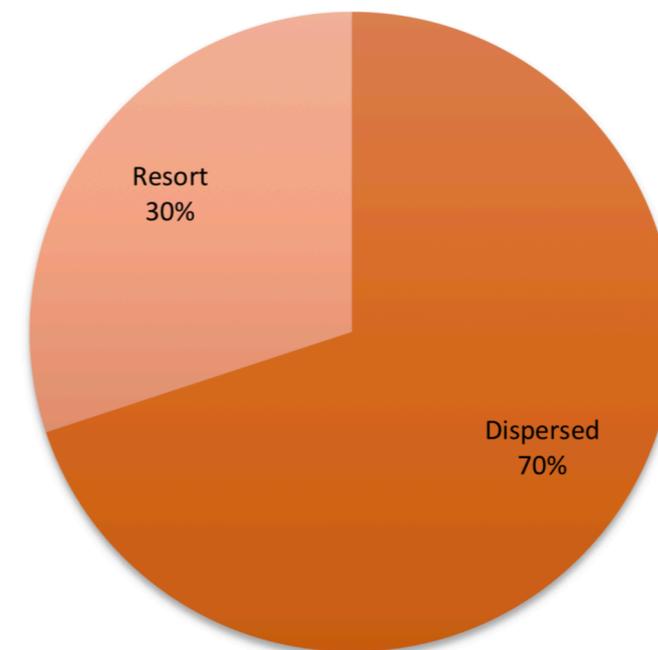


Figure 7a: Central Wasatch Recreation Activity Overview: Number of Respondents and Frequency of Visitation (N = 318)

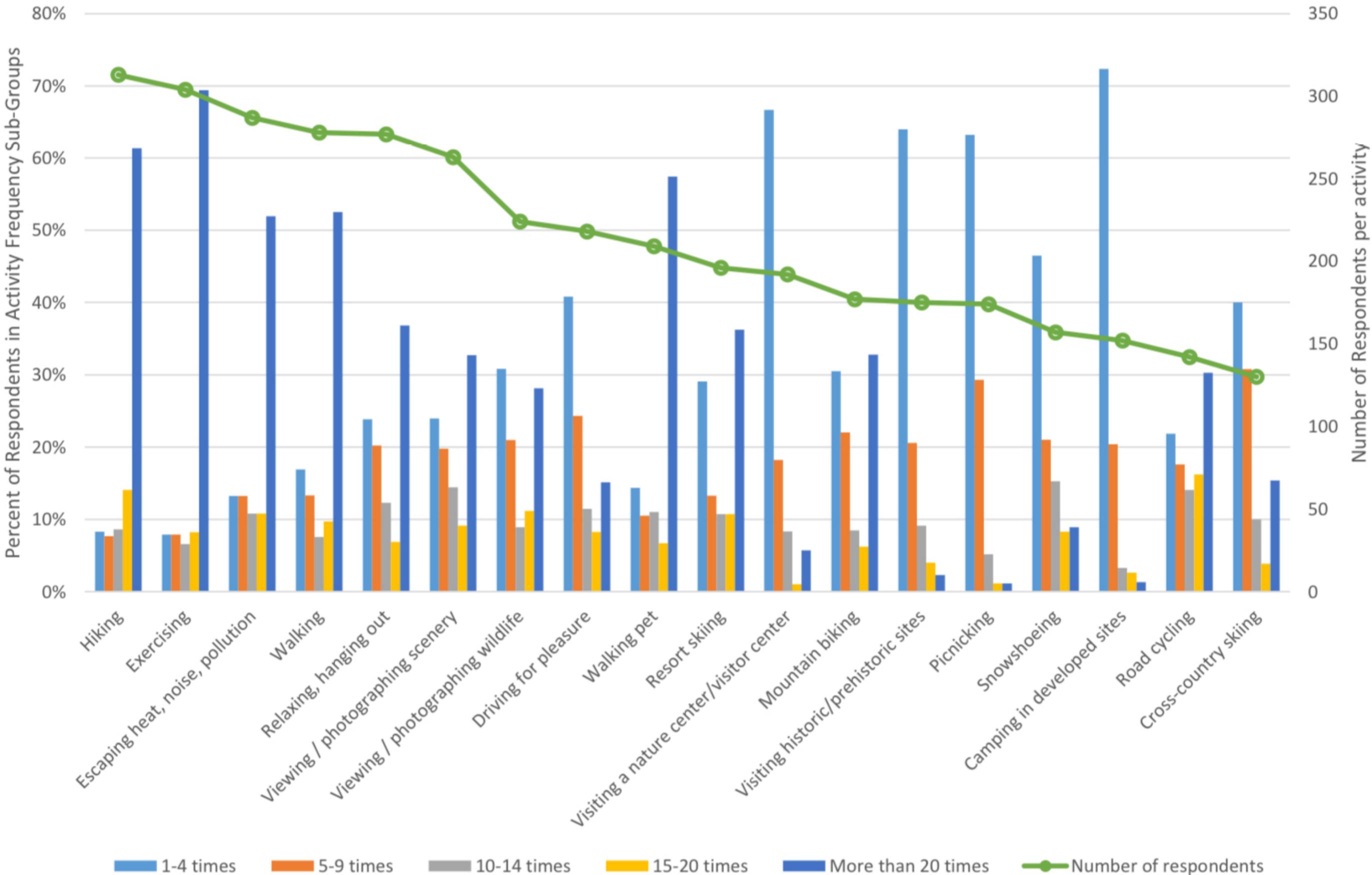
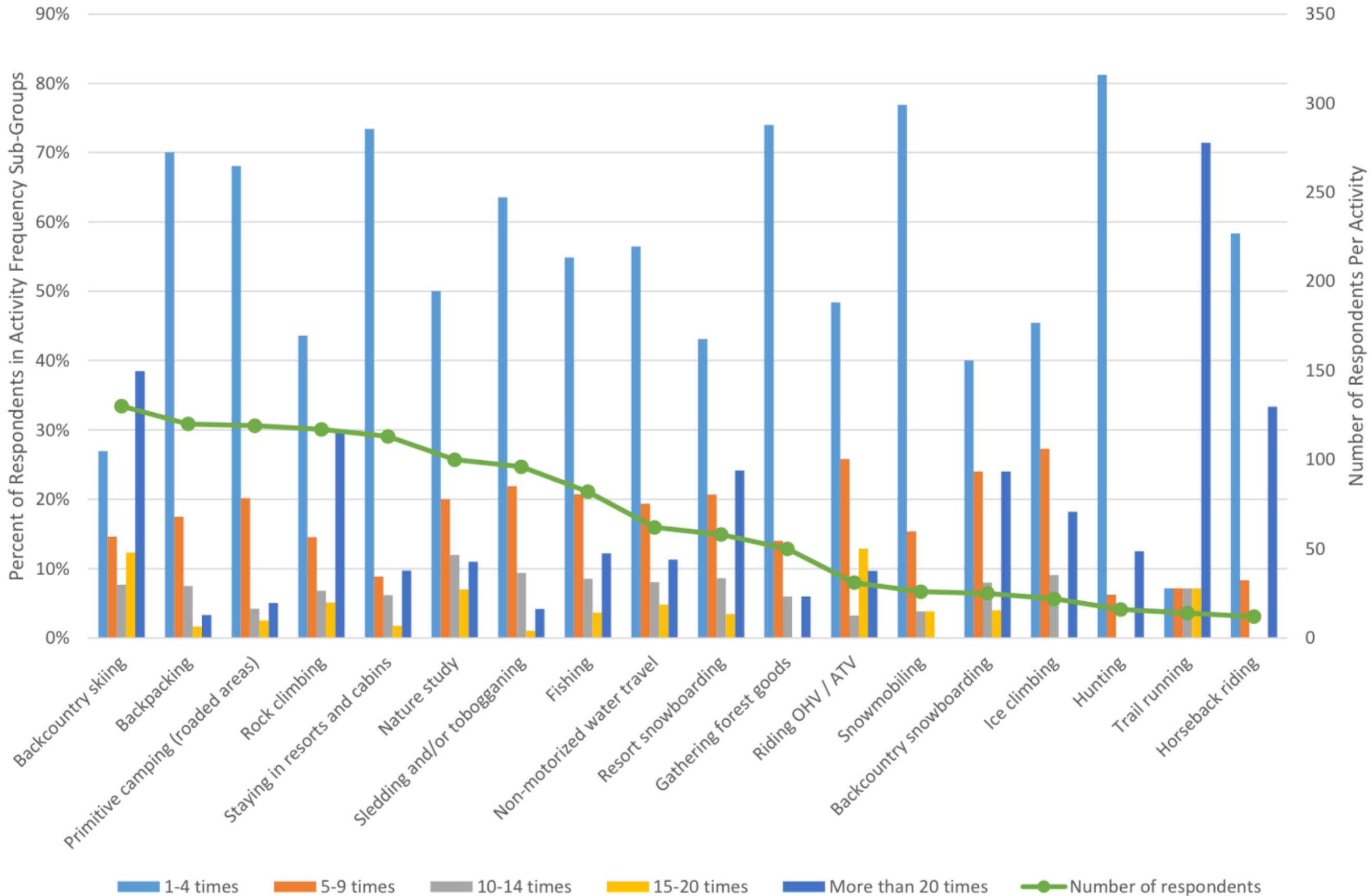


Figure 7b: Central Wasatch Recreation Activity Overview: Number of Respondents and Frequency of Visitation (N = 318)



What motivates people to visit the CWM?

- ❖ Observe scenic beauty
- ❖ Enjoy the sights and smells of nature
- ❖ For the adventure
- ❖ Experience peace and tranquility
- ❖ Improve physical health
- ❖ Be with friends enjoying activities

Recreational Amenities



Repetitive Terms: Natural Environment

- ❖ Preservation
- ❖ Watershed
- ❖ Wilderness
- ❖ Protect
- ❖ Keep it wild
- ❖ **Development**

Support:
Trails
Parking lots
Public
transportation

Opposition:
Housing/Hotels
Ski area expansion
Additional lifts
Connections

Development Continuum



Development
Threshold:
Biocentric



Collision course

- ❖ Between recreational pursuits, mainly the intensity of use, and other values (ie. Wildlife, watershed, solitude)
- ❖ Even between respective recreational interests
 - ❖ Hiking vs biking
 - ❖ Resort vs Backcountry skiing



Losses of native fauna

- ❖ brown (grizzly) bear--extirpated
- ❖ Canadian lynx--reduced numbers and distribution, if not extirpated
- ❖ wolverine--reduced numbers and distribution, if not extirpated
- ❖ northern river otter--reduced numbers and distribution
- ❖ (American bison--uncertain former distribution in the area, depending on how area is defined, maybe reduced numbers and distribution)
- ❖ yellow-billed cuckoo--formerly nested in SL County and SLC, now extirpated as a breeding species
- ❖ Lewis' woodpecker--formerly nested in SL County and SLC, now extirpated as a breeding species
- ❖ purple martin--formerly nested in SL County and SLC, now extirpated as a breeding species
- ❖ veery--formerly nested in SL County and SLC, now extirpated as a breeding species
- ❖ gray catbird--formerly nested in SL County and SLC, now extirpated as a breeding species
- ❖ American redstart--formerly nested in SL County and SLC, now extirpated as a breeding species
- ❖ Columbia spotted frog--formerly common in SL County and SLC, now extirpated
- ❖ western toad--formerly in SL County and SLC, now extirpated
- ❖ Great Plains toad--possibly formerly in SL County and SLC; if so, now extirpated
- ❖ least chub--formerly in SL County and SLC, now extirpated
- ❖ western pearlshell--formerly in SL County and SLC, possibly common, now extirpated
- ❖ winged floater--formerly common in SL County and SLC, now extirpated

Additions of non-native fauna

- ❖ house mouse--now nearly ubiquitous
- ❖ black rat--low elevations
- ❖ Norway rat--low elevations
- ❖ mountain goat--high elevations
- ❖ European starling--now ubiquitous
- ❖ house sparrow--now ubiquitous
- ❖ rock dove (or pigeon)--now ubiquitous
- ❖ New Mexico whiptail--low elevations
- ❖ pond slider--now in most low-elevation waters
- ❖ common snapping turtle--now in most low-elevation waters
- ❖ American bullfrog--low elevations
- ❖ too many non-native fishes to list (various non-native trouts, whitefish, minnows, shiners, chubs, carp, suckers, killifish, bass, sunfish, catfish, mosquitofish, etc. ad infinitum)
- ❖ New Zealand mudsnail--now in all high-gradient streams
- ❖ Asian clam--now in most low-elevation canals, streams, etc.
- ❖ brown garden snail--low elevations
- ❖ giant slug--low elevations
- ❖ other mollusks

Needs

- ❖ Protection of places and values needs administrative authority and greater permanence
- ❖ Identify values of place and capacity thresholds
- ❖ Behavioral shifts - Change behaviors over changing the land
 - ❖ Landscape ethic needs to accompany recreational pursuits
- ❖ More funding for land managers



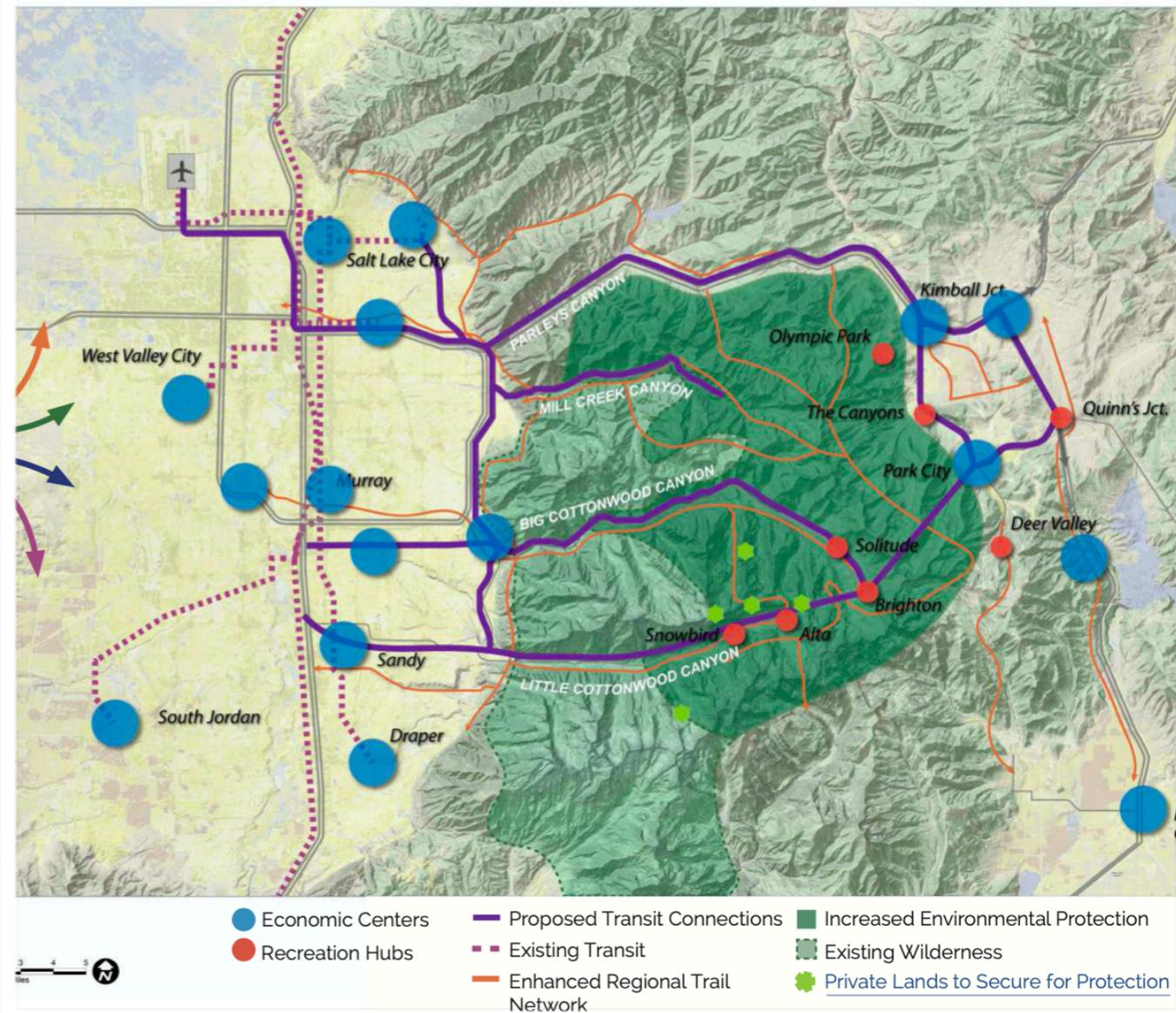
MOUNTAIN ACCORD

THE PROPOSED CENTRAL WASATCH BLUEPRINT

Mountain Accord Actions

- ❖ Enact protective land and water overlay for Wasatch
- ❖ Recreation plan
- ❖ Commence comprehensive transportation EIS
- ❖ Environmental Dashboard
- ❖ Central Wasatch Commission

THE PROPOSED CENTRAL WASATCH BLUEPRINT



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HIGHWAY GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS

AUTHORIZATION

2017 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Wayne A. Harper

House Sponsor: Francis D. Gibson

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regg
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ore



Sen. Harper,
Wayne A.



Rep. Gibson,
Francis D.

Substitute Sponsor: Sen.
Harper, Wayne A.

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Mayne, K.	Niederhauser, W.
Okerlund, R.	Thatcher, D.
Van Tassell, K.	Vickers, E.

2017 Legislative Session

... proceeds from the issuance of bonds shall be provided to the Department of Transportation to pay all or part of the costs of the following state highway construction or reconstruction projects: (b) \$100,000,000 to be used by the Department of Transportation for transportation improvements as prioritized by the Transportation Commission for projects that:

- (i) have a significant economic development impact associated with recreation and tourism within the state; and
- (ii) address significant needs for congestion mitigation.

SB 277 authorized the \$ for the LCC EIS...

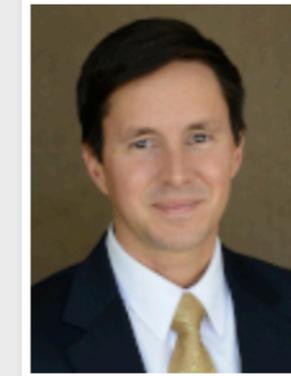
Enrolled

S.B. 268

Printer Friendly 

Bill Sponsor:

Floor Sponsor:



Sen. Cullimore,
Kirk A.

Rep. Gibson,
Francis D.

1

TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE BOND AMENDMENTS

2

2019 GENERAL SESSION

3

STATE OF UTAH

4

Chief Sponsor: Kirk A. Cullimore

5

House Sponsor: Francis D. Gibson

6

Substitute Sponsor: Rep.
Gibson, Francis D.

Drafting Attorney: Kurt P.
Gasser

Fiscal Analyst: Brian Wikle

2019 Legislative Session

UDOT... shall use bond proceeds and the funds provided to it under Section [72-2-124](#) to pay for the costs of right-of-way acquisition, construction, reconstruction, renovations, or improvements to the following highways:

(xvii) \$13,000,000 for corridor preservation and land acquisition for a transit hub at the mouth of Big Cottonwood Canyon;

SB 268 - authorized \$ for the BCC Parking garage

Remember CCTAP?

This was initially a complimentary effort co-lead by UDOT and the Central Wasatch Commission. UDOT cancelled this project, despite promises to be more holistic, then abruptly resigned from the Central Wasatch Commission.

The current EIS only looks at SR 210, not even comprehensively at Little Cottonwood Canyon, let alone the root of our transportation woes.



Cottonwood Canyons Transportation Action Plan Comment Period Closes on May 3

Thank you for your interest in the Cottonwood Canyons Transportation Action Plan (TAP).

The Cottonwood Canyons TAP will build on work completed from previous studies to identify short-to-long-term solutions for mountain transportation in the Cottonwood Canyons. The TAP is a separate project from the Little Cottonwood Canyon EIS.

The TAP study area includes both Big and Little Cottonwood Canyons and will address topics such as tolling, parking structures, pedestrian and bike facilities, roadway safety and capacity, trailheads and transit. Components such as project prioritization, travel demand management strategies, funding pathways and implementation steps will also be part of the TAP.

Fast Forward to Today...

- ❖ LCC EIS: “Substantially improve transportation related safety, reliability, and mobility on SR210 from Ft. Union Blvd through the Town of Alta, for all users on SR 210”
 - ❖ Scoping, Re-Scoping, Screening Criteria
 - ❖ Alternatives Development
- ❖ Central Wasatch Commission doing regional transportation plan
- ❖ Utah Governor and Congressional Delegation won't protect Wasatch until transportation is “finished”



Transportation Initiative	UDOT Little Cottonwood Canyon Environmental Impact Statement	CWC Mountain Transportation System Initiative
Year Initiated	Fall 2018	January 2020
Projected Completion Year	Spring 2022	End of 2020
Geographic Scope	S.R. 210 (including Wasatch Blvd from the mouth of Big Cottonwood Canyon to Alta)	S.R. 190 (Big Cottonwood Canyon), S.R. 210 (Little Cottonwood Canyon), Salt Lake Valley, and the Wasatch Back
Intended Outcomes	The final EIS will be a decision document for final design and construction of specific improvements on S.R. 210	A consensus recommendation for transportation modes for a regional mountain transportation system serving the Wasatch Front and Back
Decision Maker	UDOT	CWC, including member jurisdictions

The Mountain Transportation System (MTS) initiative is a regional transportation plan led by the Central Wasatch Commission (CWC) and member jurisdictions. The Little Cottonwood Canyon Environmental Impact Statement (LCC EIS) is an environmental study led by the Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT) in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Each study is following an independent and separate process and differs in intended outcomes, geographic scope, timeline, and the decision makers involved.

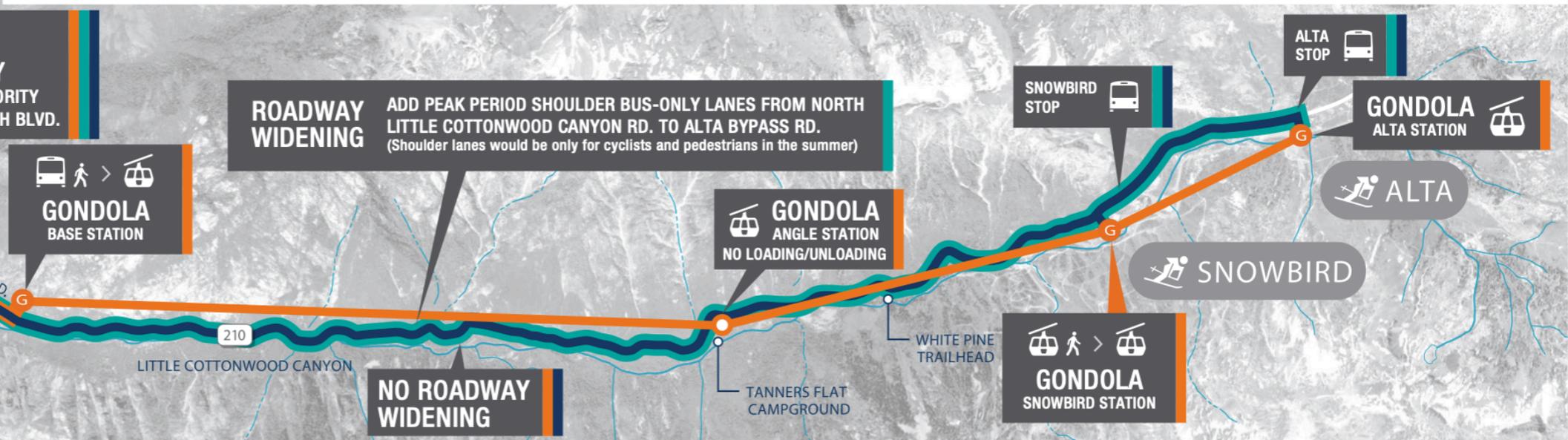
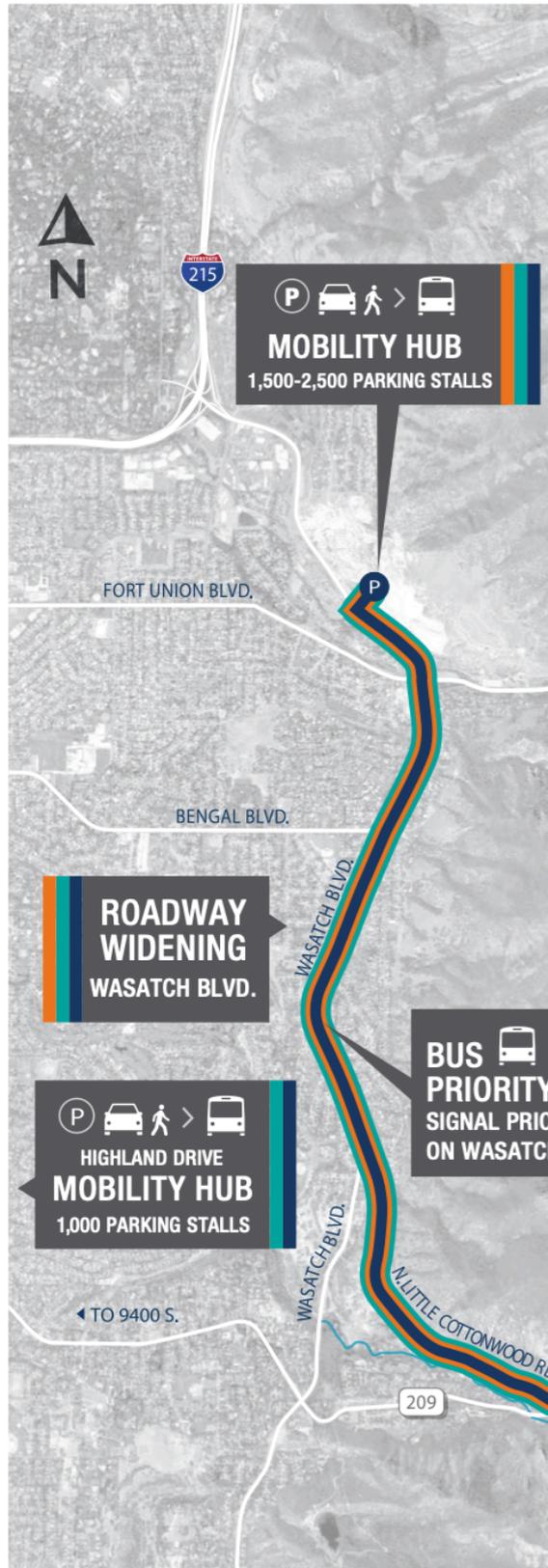
Reminder on NEPA processes

- ❖ NEPA is a public participation and decision making framework
- ❖ NEPA works best when all jurisdictions of relevance collaborate
- ❖ The most important work for NEPA, happens before NEPA begins
- ❖ UDOT's discretion is the highway and does not encompass the canyon - which is a huge problem
- ❖ UDOT is a highway agency, not a transit agency, thus we should not expect good transit analysis or evaluation, as the priority is SR 210
- ❖ When in doubt, just submit your comments
- ❖ Not a magical machine... Garbage in, garbage out!

LCC Alternatives

ALTERNATIVES SUMMARY

ALTERNATIVE	Proposed Transit Concept Travel Time	# Vehicles/peak hour	# People/peak hour + via transit/personal vehicle	Widen Wasatch Boulevard + bus priority	Mobility hub(s)	Snow sheds	Address trailhead parking	Elimination of winter road side parking adjacent to ski resorts	Tolling or management of vehicle occupancy	Add roadway capacity to S.R. 210 from North LCC Road to Alta	Impacts (Properties)		Costs (\$ Millions)	
											Relocations	Section 4(f)	Capital costs	O&M costs
ENHANCED BUS NO ADDITIONAL ROADWAY CAPACITY	54 MIN	24 Buses 6 buses per hour to each resort from each mobility hub	1,008 (Transit) 2,249 (Personal) 3,257 People	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	1 Residential	9 Sites	\$283	\$9.0
ENHANCED BUS WITH ROADWAY WIDENING FOR PEAK PERIOD (SHOULDER LANE)	36 MIN	24 Buses 6 buses per hour to each resort from each mobility hub	1,008 (Transit) 2,249 (Personal) 3,257 People	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	1 Residential	18 Sites	\$470	\$6.2
GONDOLA WITH BUS FROM MOBILITY HUB NO ADDITIONAL ROADWAY CAPACITY	63 MIN	30 Gondolas Every 2 minutes	1,050 (Transit) 2,249 (Personal) 3,299 People	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		1 Residential	9 Sites	\$393	\$4.5



Gondola - 3s

- ❖ 20 Towers
- ❖ 3 stations (Base, Snowbird, Alta)
- ❖ 1 angle station at Tanners Campground
- ❖ Doesn't serve any destination but resorts.
- ❖ No parking at gondola base
- ❖ Massive visual & environmental impacts for little, if any, benefit



Gondola - 3s

- ❖ 1,000 people/hr in gondola
- ❖ UDOT says demand is about 22,000 people
- ❖ 3 hr window
- ❖ About 3,000 people on gondola & 18,000 in cars on road!?

Examining President's Day, which is typically one of the worst days of each February, illustrates this trend best. In February, the peak periods are lasting longer in the existing condition than in the past (see Figure 14). The data also indicates the difference in volumes and peak period length between an average February day and peak days.

Figure 14: Average Hourly Traffic Volumes in Little Cottonwood Canyon (February)



Source: UDOT

November 2012

38

Bus + Sheds

- ❖ Buses are great!
- ❖ But why the additional infrastructure.
- ❖ Snowsheds would take us from a 10 day canyon closure average to a 6 - 4 day closure average
- ❖ Huge costs: price tag, environmental and visual not to mention recreational displacement



Bus + 3rd lane and sheds

- ❖ Again, more buses, great!
- ❖ 3rd lane accommodates more vehicular volumes
- ❖ The goal should be reducing the number of vehicles on the roadway so that we lessen our development footprint (1 bus removes about 20 - 30 cars)
- ❖ UDOT calls it a shoulder but the cut/fill slopes will be significant and many miles





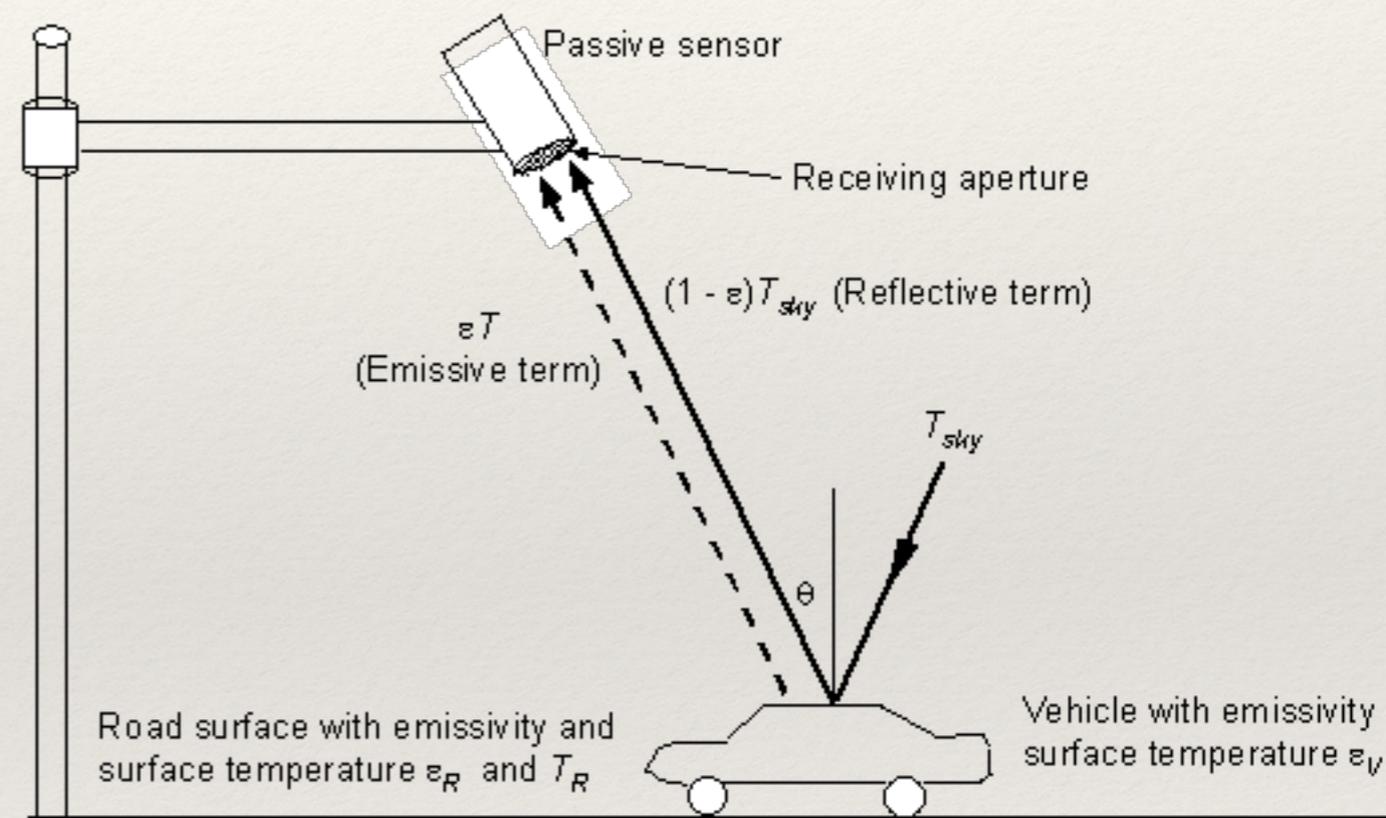
Graph: Min, Avg, Max Elevation: 7486, 8656, 10625 ft

Range Totals: Distance: 1.29 mi Elev Gain/Loss: 3159 ft, -37.1 ft Max Slope: 78.1%, -29.3% Avg Slope: 47.2%, -8.6%



Tolling

- ❖ Tolls were thought to also accompany the 3 alternatives
- ❖ In a discussion with UDOT last month they discussed the toll being assessed from White Pine to the top of the canyon not having tolls the entirety of the canyon
- ❖ Occupancy based tolls could incentivize carpooling and transit use (assuming transit serves your destination)



Infrared Sensors for tolling

Parking

- ❖ Expanding parking lots and closing road side parking
 - ❖ Gate Buttress - 21
 - ❖ Bridge - 15
 - ❖ Lisa Falls - 41
 - ❖ White Pine - 144

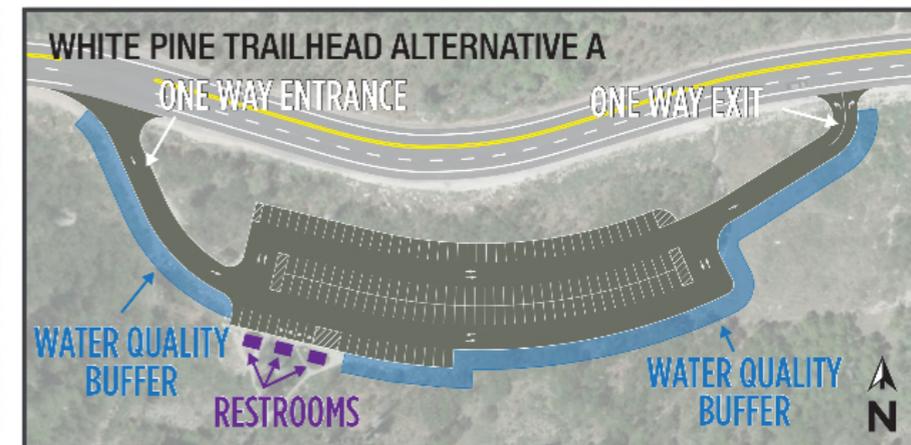
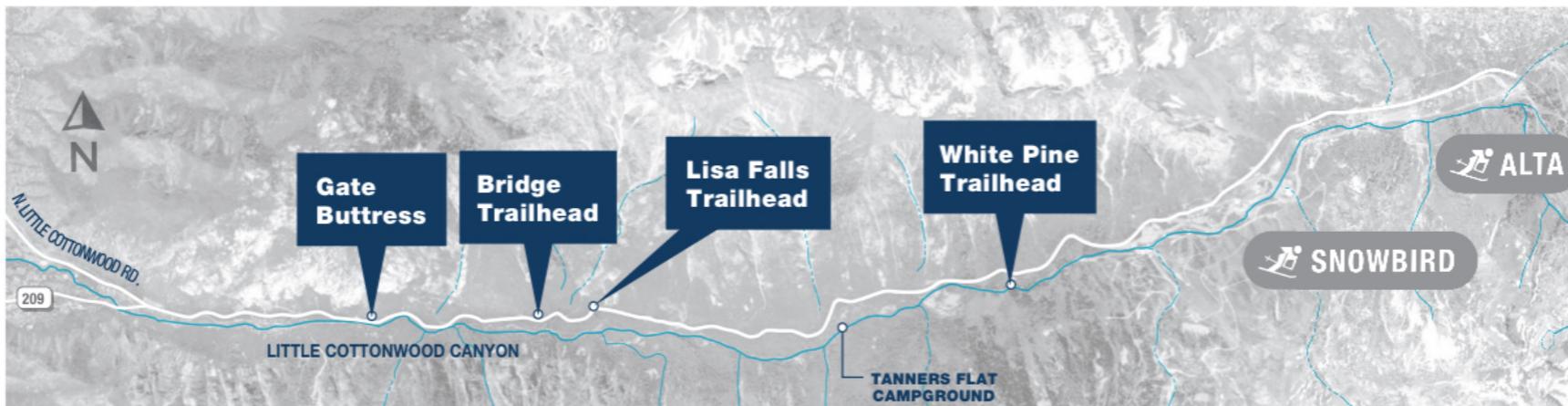
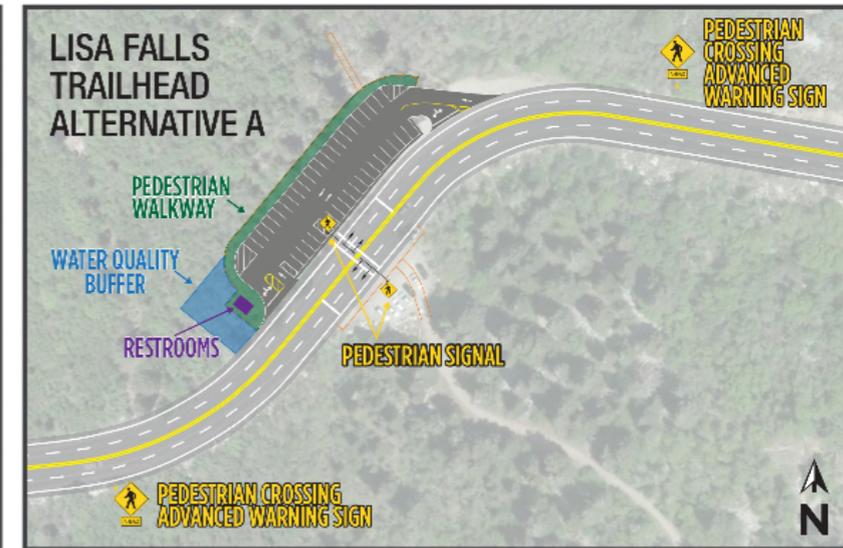
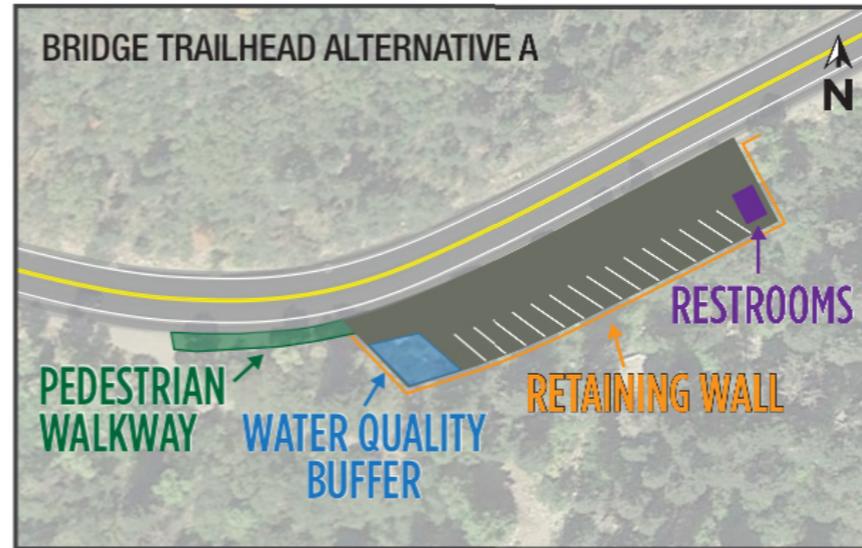
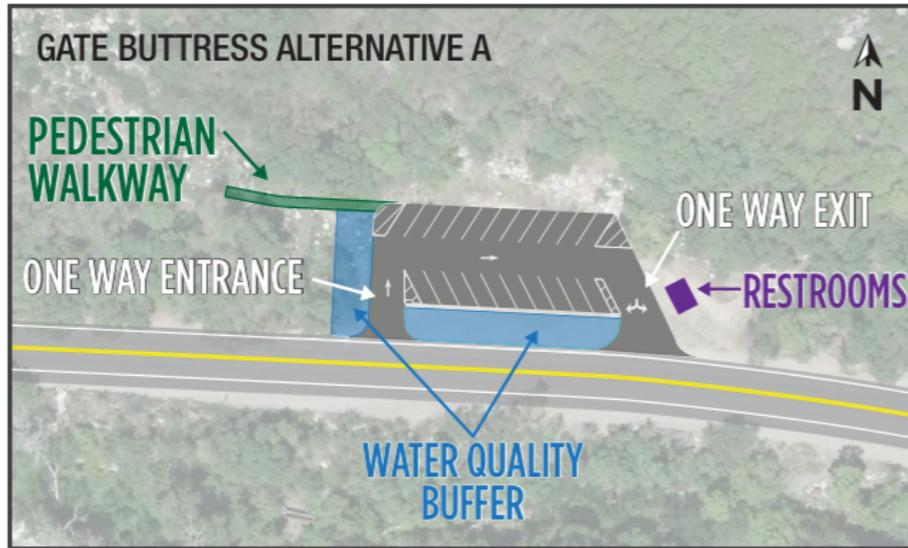
- ❖ Why are we continuing to accommodate cars?

TRAILHEAD AND ROADSIDE PARKING ALTERNATIVES

Location	Screening Results (Red=Eliminated, Green=Pass)			
	Canyon Parking Study Alternatives*	Alternatives A	Alternatives B	Alternative C
Gate Buttress	None	Proposed – 21 spaces	No Alternative B concept was developed	No parking area expansion at any trailhead, and eliminate roadside parking from the intersection of S.R. 209/S.R. 210 to Snowbird Entry 1.
Bridge Trailhead	None	Proposed – 15 spaces	No Alternative B concept was developed	
Lisa Falls Trailhead	Proposed – 65 spaces Expand existing parking lot (20 spaces), expand Cottonwood south pullout (20 spaces) and improve shoulder parking (25 spaces).	Proposed – 41 spaces Expand existing parking lot and include restrooms. The number of parking spaces had to be reduced by 5 from existing conditions because the topography limits the number of parking spaces.	Proposed – 46 spaces Expand existing parking lot to the North of S.R. 210, realign the road on a bridge and include restrooms.	
White Pine Trailhead	Proposed – 125 spaces Expand existing parking lot (80 spaces) and improve shoulder parking (45 spaces).	Proposed – 144 spaces	Proposed – 141 spaces This alternative would reduce the size of the main parking by providing 25 angled parking spaces on S.R. 210. Restrooms are included in the design.	

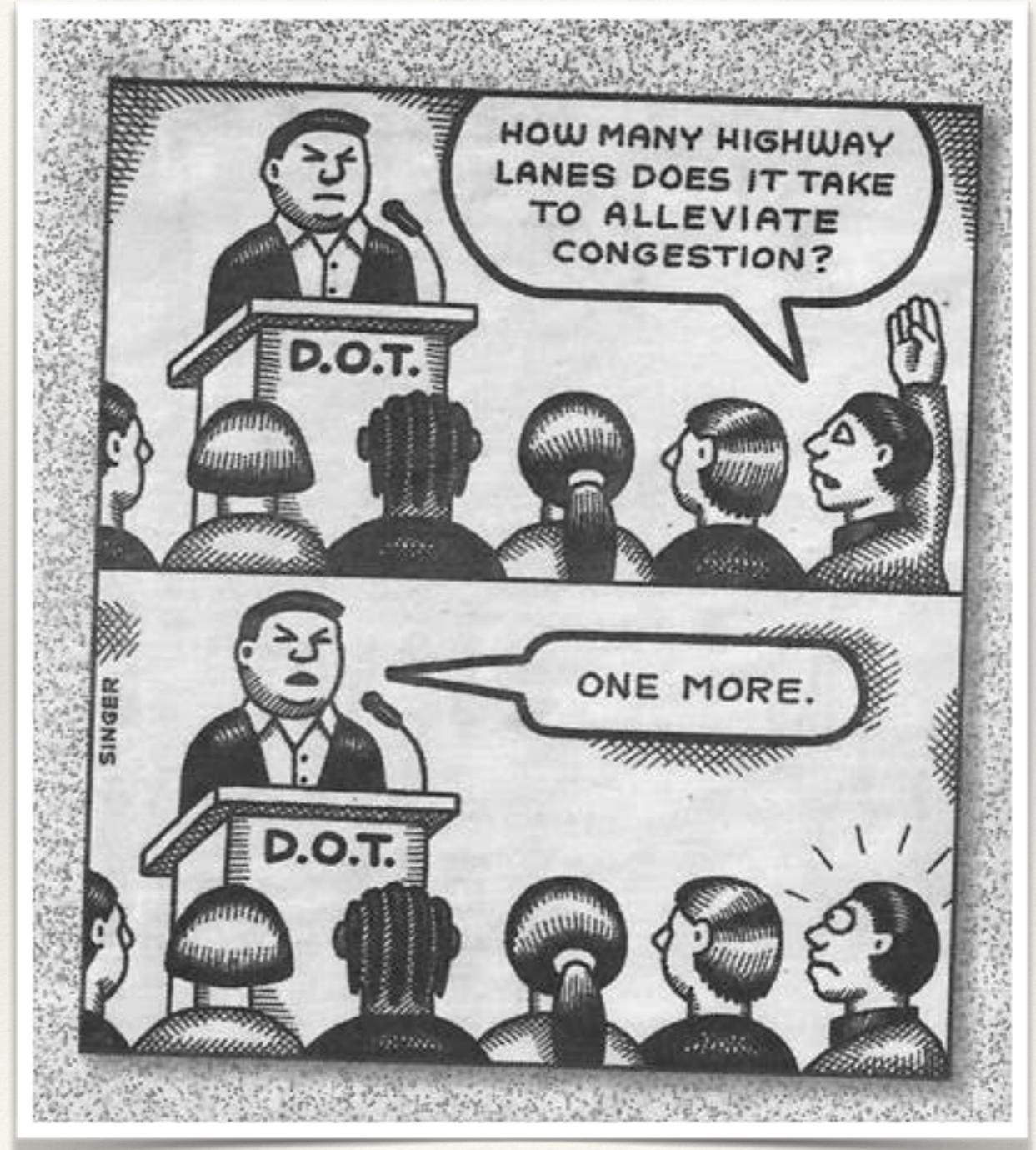
Alternatives A and B can support elimination of roadside parking within 1/4 mile of the trailhead and from the intersection of S.R. 209/S.R. 210 to the entrance to Snowbird Entry 1

* No design figures were provided as part of the Canyon Parking Study
Grit Mill parking expansion scheduled for 2020



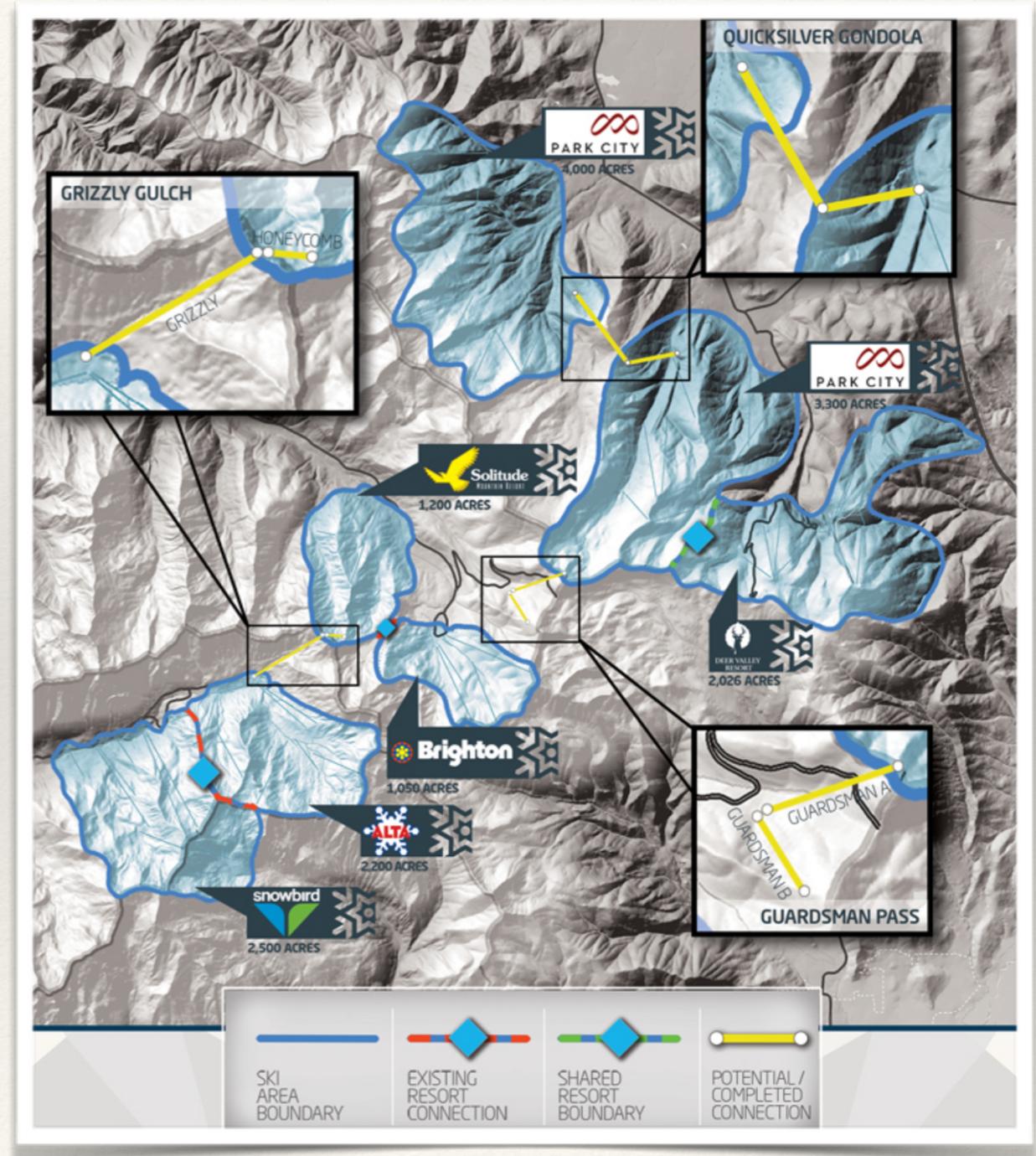
Wasatch Blvd

- ❖ Two Options- N LCC Road to Bengal Blvd
 - ❖ Imbalanced Lane - 1 N-bound lane and 2 S-bound lanes
 - ❖ Five-Lane - Add 1 lane in each direction
- ❖ Widening Wasatch Blvd, just accommodates more cars



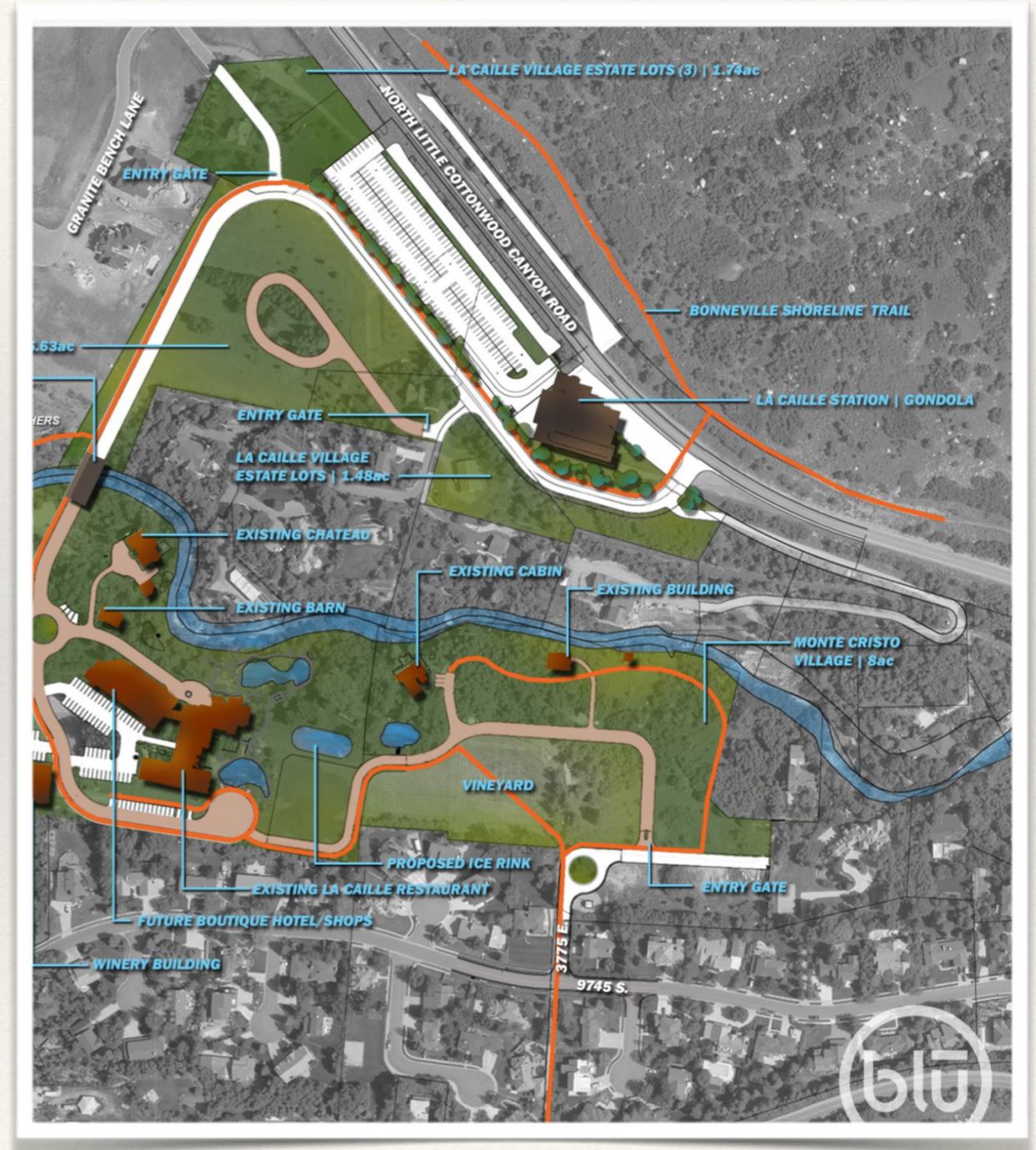
Other Ideas

- ❖ Alta Ski Area & Ski Utah Proposals - Lift Connection to Park City



Other Ideas

- ❖ Alta Ski Area Proposal - Lift Connection to Park City
- ❖ La Caille Resort Development Gondola Base Proposal



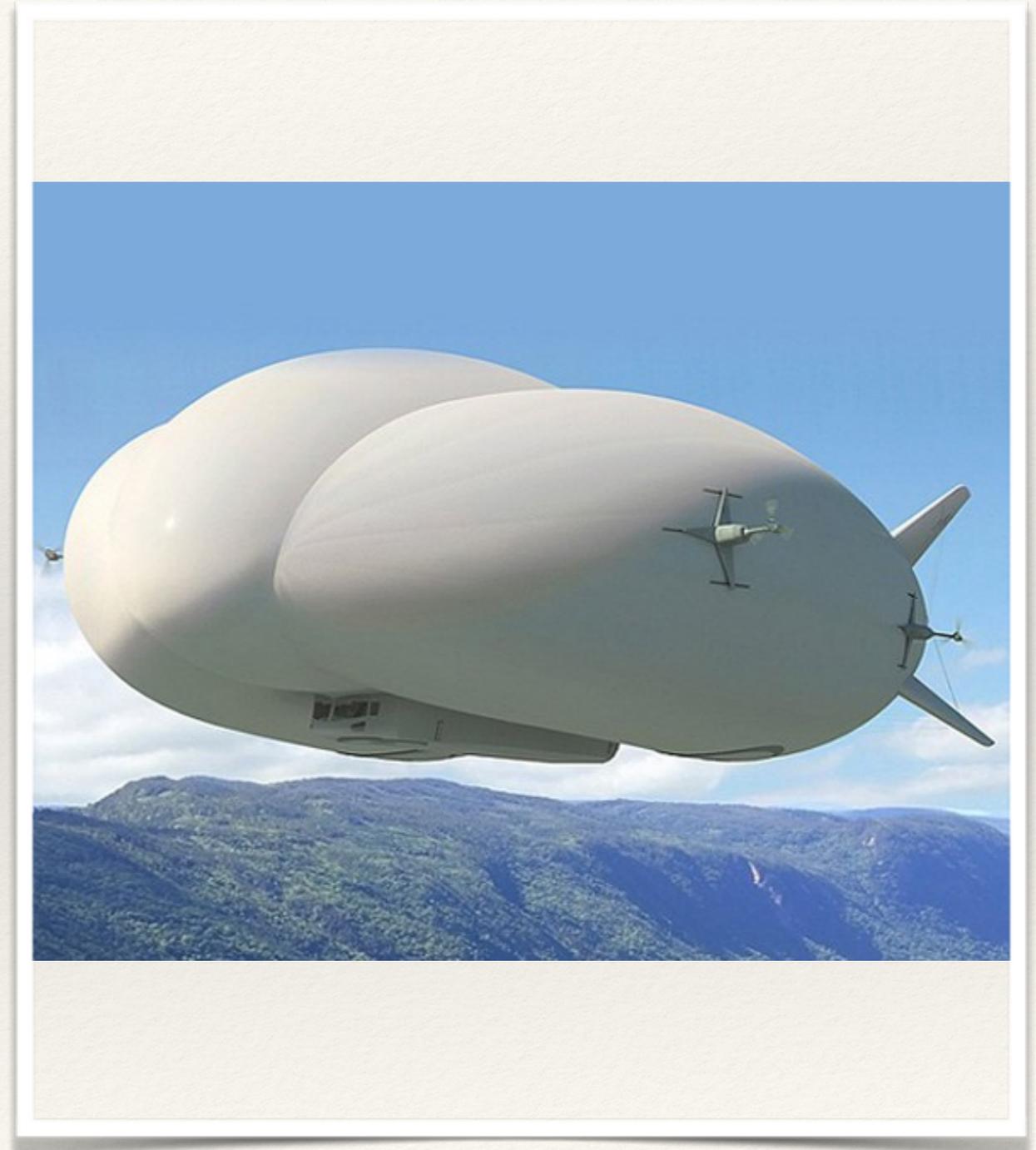
Other Ideas

- ❖ Alta Ski Area Proposal - Lift Connection to Park City
- ❖ La Caille Resort Development Gondola Base Proposal
- ❖ “Zion National Park” Shuttle



Other Ideas

- ❖ Alta Ski Area - Lift Connection to Park City
- ❖ La Caille Resort Development Gondola Base
- ❖ “Zion National Park” Shuttle
- ❖Or...
- ❖





Save Our Canyons option

**Connect people to canyons
without needing cars**

We have to stop incrementally accommodating cars and get to a real solution.

Mountain Transportation Study

Objective: Regional Connectivity

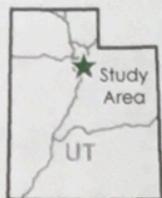
Connect canyons to destinations in Salt Lake Valley
Connect canyons to Summit County

Mode Choices

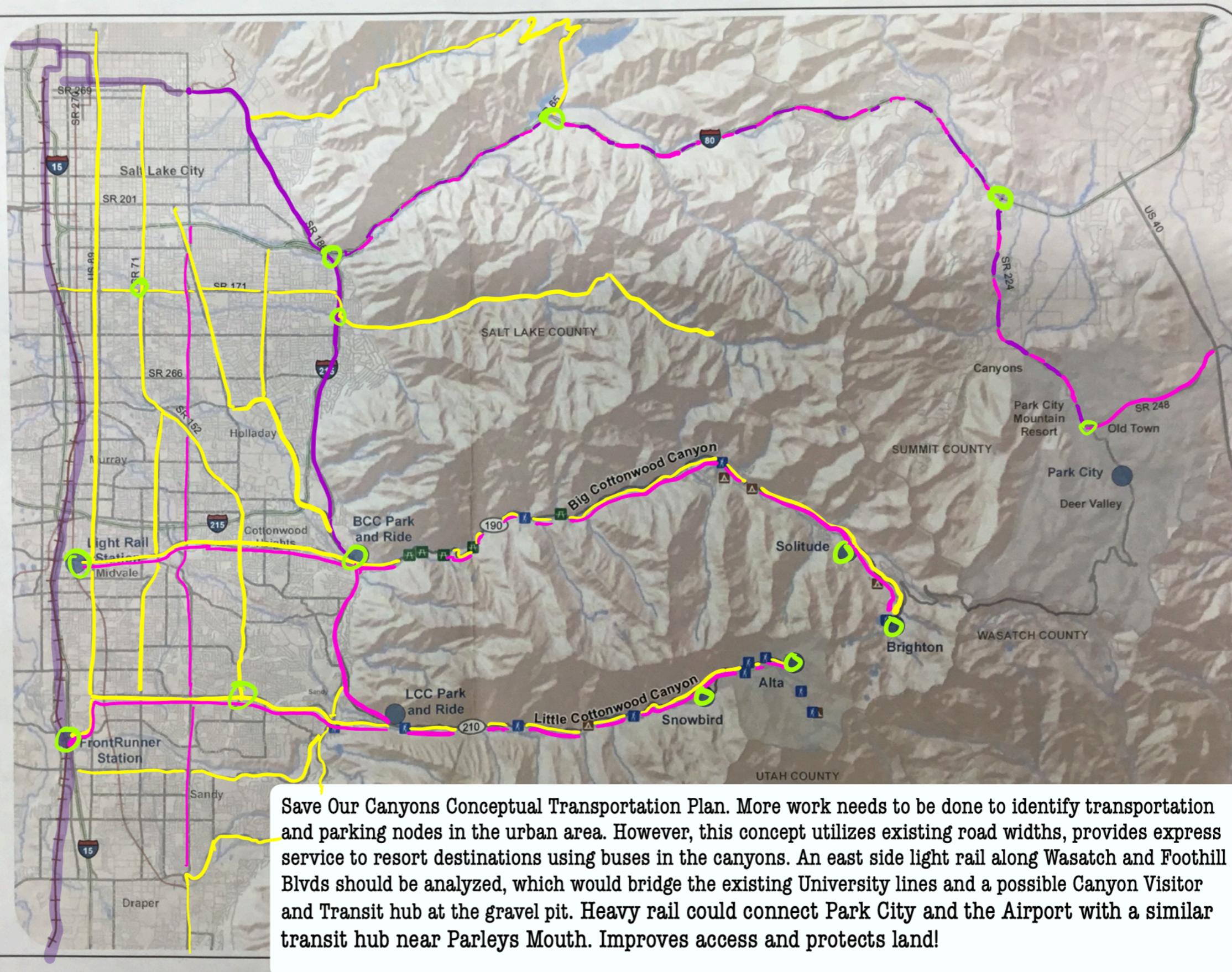
-  Roadway
-  Bus
-  BRT (Bus Rapid Transit)
-  Rail
-  Aerial
-  Potential Nodes
-  Picnic Area
-  Trailhead
-  Campground
-  Commuter Rail
-  FrontRunner South
-  Light Rail (Trax)
-  County Boundary

0 1 2 Miles

Thematic data is from the AGRC, U.S. Forest Service, and town of Alta. Map prepared by Lochner.



MOUNTAIN
Transportation Study



Save Our Canyons Conceptual Transportation Plan. More work needs to be done to identify transportation and parking nodes in the urban area. However, this concept utilizes existing road widths, provides express service to resort destinations using buses in the canyons. An east side light rail along Wasatch and Foothill Blvds should be analyzed, which would bridge the existing University lines and a possible Canyon Visitor and Transit hub at the gravel pit. Heavy rail could connect Park City and the Airport with a similar transit hub near Parleys Mouth. Improves access and protects land!

Enhanced regional connectivity

- ❖ Serves all users, all seasons
- ❖ Designs a system around values we seek to protect
- ❖ Gives everyone an option other than cars well before Canyons
- ❖ Would also benefit other trips and commuting
- ❖ Truly benefits the broader public warranting public investment
- ❖ Wouldn't require massive development in/near Canyons



Conclusions

- ❖ This EIS serves 2 resorts and doesn't benefit the Wasatch
- ❖ It is predicated on meeting the State's economic development priorities, rather than goals of the Wasatch
- ❖ \$300 - \$500 Million gets us 5 fewer canyon closures
- ❖ Transit/Transportation should be a tool in realizing environmental, recreation and watershed goals
- ❖ The LCC EIS is not a solution rather an end run around comprehensive landscape level efforts and will induce visitation, not manage it. Induced visitation = \$ to the state.
- ❖ There is nothing supportable in the current alternatives in the EIS as packaged

There's an inherent risk and reality of living, visiting and doing business in these mountains - nature happens. That risk was workable when these resorts were permitted, now they and the state want more.

When Snowbird opened, they pledged "man and nature in harmony." There is nothing harmonious about altering the very nature of these canyons with more steel, asphalt or cabled contraptions.

The risks are part of the reward, if you need reliability, Park City is up what once was a beautiful and wild canyon, but is now little more than an Interstate freeway.

We should fight like hell to ensure that fate isn't foisted upon our other Wasatch Canyons.



Thank you & ?'s

Save Our Canyons is a 501c3 non-profit dedicated to *protecting the wildness and beauty of the Wasatch Mountains*. We exist because of passionate members, local foundations and the support of those in our community.

Please consider making a donation to support our work at saveourcanyons.org

