TO: Bureau of Land Management  
Moab Field Office  
82 Dogwood Ave  
Moab, Utah 84532

RE: Mill Creek Community Collaboration Recommendations

October 22, 2021

Dear Ms. Gaddis-Wyatt,

As you know, during the past several years over 21 stakeholders representing local government, non profits and neighbors to trailheads at Mill Creek Canyon met and discussed impacts of increased visitor numbers in our area and particularly at Mill Creek Canyon. The location of both the Powerdam and Highland Trailheads adjacent to residential neighborhoods is problematic. Since 2018 the Mill Creek Community Collaboration collected feedback from the community and all stakeholders to develop recommendations for the BLM, the City and the County to help address and reduce these community impacts.

As participants in the MCCC process the <Moab City Council/Grand County Commission> supports the recommendations as presented to the City Council and County Commission by the MCCC on June 22nd, and to the BLM on August 12th for use in developing solutions. A summary bullet list of these recommendations is attached to this letter and the power point and final recommendations document may be found here:  
https://moab84532.wixsite.com/mccc/post/recommendations-presentation

There is now work to be done collaboratively to ease these growing pressures and reconcile challenges presented by various recommendations on our residential neighborhoods, transportation infrastructure and community. The <City/County> welcomes opportunities to work with the BLM as these solutions are developed at these interfaces between BLM and city and county boundaries, and we hope these solutions can be developed in the near term.

Sincerely,

Emily Niehaus  
Mayor  
City of Moab
**Mill Creek Community Collaborative Recommendations for Mill Creek Canyon Summary**  
*(copied from presentation to City and County on June 22\textsuperscript{nd}, 2021)*  
For details about these recommendations see the Powerpoint and Recommendations Document provided to the Council and Commission

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Intentions</strong></th>
<th><strong>Recommendations</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provided for each set of recommendations to assist with inevitable changes needed over time</td>
<td>As agreed to by the group via consensus; those topics with a few unable to agree noted as majority recommendations</td>
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**RIPARIAN***
- Well marked designated trails system
- Improve and regenerate native vegetation
- Allow SAR and EMS access and improve signage to assist visitors in finding their way in the canyon
- Work together to improve the condition of the riparian corridor

**DESIGNATE A TRAILS SYSTEM** including
- areas where trails need to be hardened;
- determine the level of trail building required based on use levels;
- identify locations for constructed erosion control structures

**DEVELOP A LONG-TERM VEGETATION PLAN** including
- native and non-native plant distribution and
- once a trail system is designated create a revegetation plan
- include vegetation monitoring to guide future work.

**TRAILS & SIGNAGE***
- Well marked designated trails system
- Improve and regenerate native vegetation & crusts where damaged by social trailing
- Allow SAR and EMS access
- Improve signage particularly in the front country
- Protect archeological sites through information and trail rerouting

**DESIGNATE A TRAILS SYSTEM** knowing that not all trails need to be signed
- Trails will appear on BLM maps;
- Complete environmental surveys and NEPA and create structure for consistent, legal & coordinated trail work;

**SIGNAGE SHOULD** include
- Trailhead signs with consistent info about erosion, crusts, safety etc
- Information so visitors understand actions harm or help
- Minimal use of signs in backcountry and middle country

**BACK COUNTRY***
- Monitoring use impacts should drive any actions in the Backcountry.
- Increase in number of people using the area
- Decrease in perceived solitude/quiet
- Increase in social trails
- Erosion increases (parking areas, streambank, trails)
- Increase in damage to rock art, graffiti
- Water quality degrades
- New user-created access areas are popping up
- Increase in camping activities

**DESIGNATE A TRAILS SYSTEM, as a lower priority than in other zones**
- No wayfinding signage in this zone
- Trails may need maintenance, but are not heavily hardened
- Monitor use impacts – if methods for this don’t exist, develop them
- Map current use impacts and levels
- Develop a monitoring plan with a timeline for repeated data collection

**MIDDLE COUNTRY***
- Protect existing vegetation and crusts
- Provide safe parking
- Allow EMS/SAR access
- Prevent congestion in neighborhood areas near access points

**DESIGNATE A TRAILS SYSTEM and revisit old trail inventories from the 90s**
- Standardize trail work
- Determine locations for critical signs for wayfinding
- Coordinate with larger efforts in the area & work on a youth program
- Monitor use impacts

**SIGNAGE SHOULD**
- Be consistent with signage at trailheads & in other zones
- Install a kiosk at each trailhead & wayfinding signs in key locations
- Create a plan for the Highland trailhead and engage neighbors
- Consider using more trail counters in Mid Country to help assess impacts

**BEGIN TO MONITOR USE AT OTHER ACCESS POINTS**
### Front Country

- Provide well marked clear trails in designated locations to protect existing vegetation and crusts and facilitate plant regeneration
- Provide safe parking with clear aces to Powerdam area, & to trail to N Fork Falls
- Allow for SAR/EMS access when needed for rescues
- Reduce congestion in neighborhood areas by improving bicycle and pedestrian access to the trailhead area
- Reduce overflow parking in nearby neighborhoods and minimize spread of this and other impacts to other locations

**As the primary access to the trail to the N Fork Falls this area sees the highest visitor activity.**

Currently parking is on the south side of the creek primarily which creates overflows down the road and recently onto private land near Mill Creek Drive. This topic was the one area where the group did not manage to reach consensus on the recommendation to move the primary parking to PSH, although a supermajority of the group did agree with that recommendation.

### Trailhead Recommendations

- Both sides of the creek are important to consider in planning parking and access that allows for management actions that can limit use at appropriate levels for the canyon, minimize user group conflict and mitigate impacts on existing and future residential neighborhoods.
- Access from PSH provides better opportunities for orientation due to its location above the Powerdam and trails

**Traffic Flow, shifting primary access to Potato Salad Hill**

- Powerhouse Lane is a small dead end residential road that is not designed for the thru traffic to the Powerdam. The new development in process between Mill Creek Drive and Powerdam will increase this pressure
- Sand Flats Road, while heavily traveled at times, has always been a thoroughfare for recreation and mountain access and can be designed to handle larger traffic flows.

### Trail Recommendations

- Prioritize archeological clearance so that a trails system can be designated in the front and middle country by the end of 2022.
- Involve Trail Mix with trails work and stabilization to keep it consistent with other trail work in the region
- Install trail counters and incorporate revegetation actions in areas off trail
- Consider a bridge across Mill Creek in the Powerdam Area

**Make sure beaver dams and flash floods are considered in all trail crossing areas**

### Sign Recommendations

- Place wayfinding or directional signage in key locations to assist new hikers in finding the falls and parking areas
- Place clear signage prohibiting bicycles off trail
- Involve archeologists and create informational signs and addressing graffiti
- Include signage on roadways in the City to assist motorists in finding the trailhead and Potato Salad Hill
- Provide information about other locations with recreational access to water

### Enforcement

The MCCC recognizes a need for increased enforcement in the front country and trail heads especially

- Coordinate law enforcement between the City, County and BLM as the group agreed without enforcement there is no way to change these behaviors.
- County funding for a trail ambassador program coordinated with the BLM can begin to address some of the safety and resource concerns. The 2021 pilot program should also develop a long term outreach and monitoring program for the area
- Monitoring use impacts in this zone should be part of the enforcement process.

### Fees

The MCCC recognizes that enforcement and active management costs money – and fees are seen as a means to raise some of those funds. A way of collecting fees that can allow locals a way to volunteer to have the fee waived was also suggested.

- Use an “iron ranger” or QR code system for fee collection to park at Powerdam and Potato Salad Hill, and at any trailhead where fees may be deemed necessary.
- Fees should be used at the trailhead and in the Canyon.