



Fall

2015



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The Mission of Friends of Wasatch Mountain State Park is to preserve and protect the historical and ecological integrity of Wasatch Mountain State Park through public awareness and education and to promote the development of responsible recreational opportunities and facilities for present and future generations.

President's Message

Dear Friends,

As the days grow shorter and the leaves and temperatures alike continue to fall, I hope you are taking advantage of this wonderful time of year to get out and hike the trails, bike the trails, ride the trails, golf the courses, or just take in the beautiful scenery that our Park has to offer!

Those of you who have been out to the trails recently, will have noticed the new fee stations in the parking lots at the base of Guardsman Pass and Dutch Hollow. Wasatch Mountain is one of the last Utah State Parks to implement a day use fee to help cover expenses and fund future projects, and I am excited to announce that effective with all 2016 new memberships and membership renewals, members will receive a complimentary annual pass valid for unlimited use of Wasatch Mountain State Park from the time of membership purchase/renewal, through the 2016 calendar year. The passes are now available at the Park Visitors Center where you may either drop off a check for your 2016 membership, or you may pay for your membership on-line at www.friendsofwasatch.org and pick up your pass 5 business days later.

Given this exciting new benefit that is now included with membership, and also to bring consistency to membership pricing, the Board of Directors has decided to implement a standard cost of \$25 per person for 2016. If a couple wishes to obtain a membership, the cost will then be \$50. Children of members, who are under the age of 18, will be covered under the couples membership. We will also continue to offer a reduced rate to members, for participation in future FOW events, with non-member pricing being slightly higher.

So be sure to renew your membership and pick up your FOW Annual Pass, and please pass the word on to others you know who might be interested in joining our organization and utilizing our wonderful park amenities as an FOW member!

Lastly, I would like to once again thank all of you who helped make the 2015 Hit & Giggle event such a success. As a result of your participation and generosity, we were able to raise approximately \$11,000 to be donated to the Park in support of the Tate Barn Renovation project. We will be providing an overview of the Tate Barn Project at our Holiday Party scheduled for Friday, December 4th. I hope to see you all there!

Warm Regards,
Tami Brown
FOW President



Welcome New Members!

Di Dray, Heber
Ron & Susan Lockhart,
Midway
Kathy & Donovan Symonds.,
Midway
Mark & Gretchen Humke,
Heber
Sheila Hudon & Kenneth
Nielsen, Midway

Membership Report

We are currently at 125 members with 104 renewing from 2014 and 21 new members. Thank you to our renewing members for your continued support of the Park. And a hearty welcome to our new members with an invitation to become involved in our many activities.

Membership Dues

The board has reviewed the FOW membership dues and approved a change beginning with 2016 membership. Until now our dues have been structured with couples paying less per person than a single person paid. After receiving input from some members, the board agreed that the more equitable approach is to have a standard per-person rate. The benefits of Park membership occur on a per person basis. The new WMSP annual pass is a benefit given to each individual FOW member. The new dues will be a uniform \$25 per person. All members minor children are included at no additional cost.

Get a head start and renew now!

Fred Paxton, Membership Director

Rail With Trail Feasibility Study

In 2014 Wasatch County received a \$137,000 Utah Department of Transportation grant to study the feasibility of putting a trail alongside the historic Heber Valley Railroad from Heber to Soldier Hollow. The corridor is actually Wasatch Mountain State Park land so this would be a terrific addition to the park. This trail will connect the Midway to Heber Legacy Trail to the Deer Creek and Soldier Hollow Trails and would be a spectacular family friendly trail.

The grant required matching funds and Friends contributed \$1000 to help make this study a reality. The engineering firm that was hired looked into many issues including governmental, right of ways, wetlands, endangered species and bridge design and has determined the project is indeed feasible! The next step is to secure more funding for design and engineering and then for actual construction. The trail will be built in stages and could eventually connect with the Provo River Trail at Vivian Park where you could ride the trail downhill and catch a ride back up on the Heber Valley Railroad. This is a major undertaking as projected costs are in the \$4 million range, but it is gaining support from every corner and would be a centerpiece of the Heber Valley.

Don Taylor
FOW Trails Director

FOW Board

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PLEASE RECYCLE

Holiday Party Friday December 4th



Our Holiday Members Party will be held Friday, December 4th at Soldier Hollow Day Lodge from 6:00 to 9:00 pm. We will enjoy and dance to the music of DJ Direct who was a hit at our summer picnic. The main course will be provided by FOW serving turkey, ham and salmon. You will be able to share your favorite holiday dish as a pot-luck contribution. If your last name begins as follows, please bring:

- A-K Side Dish
- L-R Salads
- S-Z Dessert

Beer and wine will be on sale with a selection of each – no BYOB is allowed per the Utah Division of Alcohol.

A brief annual members meeting will be held covering key FOW and Park business and recognizing our Volunteer of the Year. Please RSVP by November 29th. A donation of \$10 per member and \$15 per guest is requested. You can sign up on the FOW website www.friendsofwasatch.org or mail a check payable to FOW to PO Box 727, Midway, UT, 84049 so we receive it by December 2nd. To insure that we have enough provisions for all, no walk-up attendees will be admitted.

In order to have a successful party we need volunteers for the following tasks:

- Planning
- Set-up
- Greeters
- Decorations
- Cook and bring main entrees -you will be reimbursed your costs.
- Opportunity drawing ticket hosts
- Photographer
- Clean-up
- Take down
- Laundering and returning tablecloths

Please consider volunteering for one of the above committees and contact either

Tami Paxton: vtagrma@hotmail.com or 805 750-8774

Betty Lesnevich: gblesnevich@msn.com or 973-932-2385

Tami & Betty



WATCHING THE WASATCH Park Staff Report

WMSP Numbers

Visitor Center 8 am-5 pm
daily (435) 654-1791

Campground (435) 654-3961

Reservations (800) 322-3770

Wasatch Golf Course

(435) 654-0532

Soldier Hollow Golf Course

(435) 654-7442

Become a FRIEND of

Wasatch Mountain State Park

Membership Information

www.friendsofwasatch.org

friendsofwasatchmsp@gmail.com

PO Box 727

Midway, UT 84049

Come PLAY today at Wasatch Mountain State Park! Begin unraveling your senses by visiting us at www.stateparks.utah.gov or call 877-UTPARKS

Content Not Quite Right?

For newsletter corrections

Please contact:

friendsofwasatchmsp@gmail.com

This time of year as we wait for the snow to accumulate the park is pretty quiet. Fall gives us a minute to rejuvenate and gear up for winter operations. As I am sure you are aware, the golf courses are closed. The campgrounds are also closed, however the 2 cabins and 3 group areas remain open year round for scouts, youth groups, or families who would like to experience winter camping. When we have snow the cabins are a great weekend getaway with snowmobiles because you can ride right from the cabins.

Guardman's pass and Snake Creek roads are now closed to vehicles over 800 pounds but open to snowmobiles and muscle powered vehicles. The Visitor Center is open every day from 8am-5pm except on Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Years.

Winter is a fabulous time to get outside, and the park is a perfect place to do that. If you do a lot of hiking in the summer plan to go out on the same trails this winter. Your familiar trails will look very different and it will be a new adventure. If you want to try snowshoeing or cross country skiing but aren't sure what to buy or if you will like it, come rent equipment from us and try it out. This will be our second year renting cross country skies and we have 10 new pairs just waiting to be rented. When we have 18" of snow or more on the golf course we open it for cross country skiing. These activities are great cardio workouts and they are low impact on the environment and your body.

This year we are going to attempt to plow the Dutch Hollow parking lot. We will use a snowmobile to groom the Dutch Hollow road, and Phosphate trail over to the end of our property up Pine Creek Canyon. This trail will be available for snow-bikes and cross country skiing.

Snowmobiling is another great way to enjoy winter. Make sure you are educated and prepared before venturing out. Here are a couple tips for snowmobiling. Make sure your machines are running properly and registered, tell someone where you are going even if it is for an hour, and take enough clothes, food and water to stay out for 24 hours in case you get stuck or lost. Take a map so you know where you are and where you are going. And last but not least take an avalanche beacon and know how to use it. Come to our Avalanche Awareness class.

Preparation is the key to winter fun. My motto is "there is no bad weather just poor clothing choice". To help you be prepared here are some classes and activities to help you get outside this winter.

December 12th 1-4pm: Avalanche Awareness class

January 2nd 8-4pm: Audubon Christmas Bird Count. You can go to <https://www.audubon.org/conservation/science/christmas-bird-count> to sign up and learn more. See details elsewhere in this newsletter..

January 16th 10 am-1pm: Snowshoe Tree Hike with Tree Utah

Keep an eye on the Wasatch [Facebook](#) page and Twitter [@wasatchmountain](#) for updates on programs.

Kathy Donnell, Park Naturalist kathydonnell@utah.gov

Trail NEWS!

We have made an agreement with Mountain Lands Association of Governments to develop three new, one page, trail brochures; Dutch Hollow Trail Complex, Visitor Center Trail Complex and Pine Canyon Trail Complex. These three brochures will be available starting April, 2016. Also coming: trail signs with the "you are here" designation and additional Kiosk Mapping and Signage. The extension on the WOW Trail connection was awarded so we can continue to work on the two parking areas and a trail connection from the Bone Yard to under Hwy 40 to the Provo River for future connection with the Riverview Trail Complex.



Friends & Park Upcoming Activities

2015 Moonlight Snowshoe Hikes

Snowshoe Hikes are set for Friday evenings, January 22, February 19, and, conditions permitting, March 18

Meet at the Wasatch Mountain State Park Visitor Center - Midway at 6:30 to suit up. Hit the trail at 7:00

Call 435-654-1791 to register. \$7 per person and \$6 for snowshoe rental. Cash and Checks only. We welcome kids 8 or older accompanied by an adult. Sorry, no pets are allowed. Join us in the Visitor Center for warm drinks and snacks after the hike. The hikes fill up quickly so call now!

Attention FOW Birders



Wasatch Mountain State Park will be participating in the 116th annual Christmas Bird Count (CBC). This year's event is scheduled for Saturday, January 2nd, 2016 from 8am-4pm. This is an exciting opportunity for experienced birders and those interested in learning about birding to participate in the nation's longest standing citizen science bird project. If you are interested in participating please go to <https://www.audubon.org/content/join-christmas-bird-count> to register.

Scientists rely on the remarkable trend data of Audubon's CBC data to measure changes in the environment and in bird populations throughout North America. This information paints a clear picture of bird distribution and abundance that aids in the understanding of overall bird health and what can be done to conserve bird species. While scientists rely on the data, the success of the CBC relies on people like you! Participation is free and experience is not necessary – new birdwatchers can be teamed up with experienced birdwatchers.

All birders will meet at the Visitors Center of Wasatch Mountain State Park at 8:00 AM for their zone assignments. You will then head out to count birds all day and return to the Visitor Center at 4:00 pm for a FOW sponsored dinner. Be prepared for the weather and bring a lunch or snacks, water, binoculars and your field guide to birds (if you have them).

Please contact Kathy Donnell, Park Naturalist, at kathydonnell@utah.gov to RSVP for dinner.

Avalanche Awareness Seminar

At the Visitor Center on Saturday, December 12 from 1pm to 4pm the Utah Avalanche Forecast Center will present a film "Know Before You Go" that teaches the basics of avalanche safety. Focus will be for snowshoers in the Wasatch Park area. Avalanche Center professionals will present a short documentary film on Avalanche Awareness and then we will head outside for a few demonstrations on what you can do if someone is caught in an avalanche and the gear you need for backcountry adventures.





The weather was perfect, everyone was able to tee off on time and arrive back at the dinner/auction without a hitch. No complaints, awesome entertainment, great auction items, an enormous birthday cake...: Mission Accomplished.

Here are some of the stats from the 2015 Hit n Giggle golf outing:

108 players, 18 six-person teams, the maximum we were capable of fielding

137 people attended the after-golf dinner/auction

\$11,200 net of expenses - our best fund raiser to date

We achieved our goal of raising enough money to permit the State Park to contract with engineers to provide necessary drawings to kick off the "Stabilization" of the Tate Barn. With luck, hard work, and continued community support, it is hoped that the barn will mature as a landmark attraction that will benefit our Heber Valley in many ways.

Our thanks to all who attended and we look forward to your continued support for all of the Wasatch Mountain State Park improvements that the Friends of Wasatch hopes to provide in the future.

A special thanks for all that the core committee members contributed to make life easy for me. I'd be institutionalized if weren't for Sherry, Leslie, Pat, and Tami.

Mickey Oksner

Tate Barn Project Status

On Wednesday the 4th of November a meeting to kick off the potential research of bringing the Tate Barn to a sound building structure and a viable park amenity was held at the Soldier Hollow Day Lodge. Well attended by Friends of Wasatch, Park Staff and a few interested parties we started the process to create a Tate Barn Advisory Group. The group will have its first official meeting on **Thursday, January 7th at 6:00 P.M.** Any help in recruiting community interested parties would be greatly appreciated. Contact Tracy See at tracysee@utah.gov.

Rationale Regarding Implementing Park Fees

Wasatch Mountain State Park recently joined the ranks of our other 41 state parks in charging day-use fees to on site recreationists. The last of the 42 state parks to implement a day-use recreation-based fee, Wasatch trailed in identifying a plan to administer fees over its 21,000 acres and 13 different access points. Fourth largest in visitation in 2014, the park is bordered by U.S. Forest Service land to the west where visitors pay day-use fees but recreationists do not understand the difference between the Federal vs. State Park managed lands. With multiple recreation sites it has been difficult for State Park Managers to implement but with legislative initiatives for State Parks to be zero-based in operating expenses the Park needed to address its \$150,000 operational deficit.

Day-Use Fees are only one aspect in bringing and making the park a successful amenity to Utah's State Park System. Reduction in work force, augmenting through volunteerism, reducing overhead costs through technology reductions, energy and operational initiatives, grant acquisition, increased camping occupancy, special use permits and acquisition of new event attractions along with numerous other small procedures has assisted the current staff in making up nearly \$100,000 of this deficit. "It's not been easy and we have felt the pinch in all areas but are striving to keep our customer service as priority one" reported Park Manager Tracy See.

Don't forget that your FOW membership for 2016 includes an annual pass for WMSP, so renew or sign up now!

Fish Cleaning Station Ordered!

Yippee! The Fish Cleaning Station has officially been ordered. Recommendations for the grinder included special ordering raised spray wands and the needed electrical conversion requiring the unit to be sent from back east with the estimated arrival date last week in January. The 14X14 Metal Shade Cabana cover has also been ordered and the surveying for the additions to the parking areas at the Visitor Center will include the plans for the Fish Cleaning vault and cement pad. So "Coming this Spring" a community fish cleaning station and additional visitor parking.