U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Transit Administration

Alternative Transportation in the Parks and Public Lands Program
Project Proposal for Fiscal Year 2008 Funds – Planning Project

BASIC PROJECT INFORMATION			
Project Name (Please provide a 1-2 sentence description of the project): **Mill Creek Canyon Transportation Feasibility Study**			
Proposed Funding Recipient: **USDA Forest Service**			
Public land unit(s) involved: **Wasatch-Cache National Forest**	Location of Project City: **Salt Lake City** County: **Salt Lake** State: **Utah** Congressional District: **2**		
Federal Land Management Agency managing the above unit(s): ☐ Bureau of Land Management ☐ Bureau of Reclamation ☐ Fish and Wildlife Service ☒ Forest Service ☐ National Park Service	Type of Planning Project: (Implementation projects, please use the alternate form) ☒ Planning		
☒ Proposal is to plan for a possible new alternative transportation system where none currently exists. ☐ Proposal is to plan for a possible expansion or enhancement of an existing alternative transportation system.			
ATPPL Funding Requested during FY 2008 $220,000	**Total** Cost of Planning Project at Completion (All sources) $500,000 (NEPA, Design, Engineering)		
Were you awarded FY 2006 of FY 2007 ATPPL funds? ☒ Yes ☐ No If answer "Yes," please provide amount awarded: $204,000 Note: For *Albion Basin Transportation Feasibility Study*; a separate unconnected study & location from Mill Creek Canyon			
Do you plan to request additional ATPPL funds in future years? ☒ Yes ☐ No **(Note: If you wish to compete for future ATPPL fiscal year funds you must reapply).** If answer "Yes," please specify ATPPL proposed funding levels for out years below:			
FY 2009 $	FY 2010 $300,000	Note: Highly dependent on results of Feasibility Study	
FY 2008 Funding Amounts from sources other than ATPPL funds? ☒ Yes ☐ No If answer "Yes," please specify funding levels per source below:			
State $	Local **$Unspecified - Salt Lake County**	Federal (other than ATPPL) **$15,000 Visitor fees through Forest Service**	Private sources **$5,000 Boy Scout in-kind**

CONTACT PERSON	
Name: **Carol Majeske**	Phone: **801-733-2662**
Position: **Recreation Staff Officer**	E-mail: **cmajeske@fs.fed.us**
Address: **Wasatch-Cache Ntl. Forest, Salt Lake Ranger District** **6944 South 3000 East, Salt Lake City, Utah 84121**	

OTHER PROJECT SPONSORS (in addition to funding recipient)
Salt Lake County, Great Salt Lake Boy Council of Boy Scouts, Mill Creek Canyon visitors (fees)

REQUIREMENTS
☐ If a State, Tribal, or local government entity is proposing the project, the applicant has contacted the manager of the federal land unit(s) and has the consent of the Federal land management agency or agencies affected. ☒ The project is consistent with the metropolitan and statewide planning process. ☒ The project is consistent with agency plans. ☒ The planning project will analyze all reasonable alternatives, including a non-construction option.

BASIC PROJECT DATA	
Number of Visitors (Annual): **450,000**	Daily Number of Visitors (Peak season): **5,000**
Average Number of Vehicles per Day at Peak Visitation: **1,400 cars (+ 400 bicycles/day)**	
Current Road Level of Service at Peak Visitation: **Road = D** **Parking lots/spur roads = F** (Please consult guidance where available on determining this variable. You may use observational accounts or pictures to provide an assessment of this datum for FY 2008 proposals).	
What time of the year does your land unit experience Peak Visitation? ☐ Spring ☒ Summer ☐ Fall ☐ Winter	
Current Carrying Capacity of Existing Roads: **300** (vehicles**/hour**)	
What percent of that capacity is the site operating at during peak periods? **122 %**	
Current parking shortages during peak visitation: **250** (although not suitable in canyon)	
Current Number of Persons who use the alternative transportation system (if one already exists) at peak visitation: N/A (average number of visitors/daily at peak)	
Estimated Annual Number of Persons who will use the alternative transportation system at project completion: **400,000** (anticipated number of riders or users/annually)	
Average number of auto collisions with wildlife in the area? **2** collisions/year	

Mill Creek Canyon Feasibility Study
Executive Summary

Mill Creek Canyon, Big Cottonwood Canyon, and Little Cottonwood Canyon, collectively known as the "Tri-Canyons," are located immediately adjacent to the eastern boundary of the Salt Lake City metropolitan area. Each canyon has its own unique characteristics yet they share many common issues related to their value as heavily accessed outdoor recreation areas within minutes of 1 million residents and visitors. Transportation has emerged as one of the greatest management challenges in the Tri-Canyons as the private automobile remains the primary vehicle of choice.

Mill Creek Canyon is most accessible and residents utilize it daily for both exercise and an escape from the urban environment. Recreation uses change with the season including cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, picnicking, hiking, mountain biking, road biking, jogging, wildlife viewing, and dog walking. Mill Creek Canyon Road ends 8.5 miles up the canyon. Estimated yearly canyon visitation is 450,000

Transportation-related issues are increasing in the canyon including heavy bicycle use on the narrow roadway without bike lanes, parking exceeds capacity year-round, overflow parking lots may cause resource damage and cause people to walk on the roadway to access trails, and the road serves as a missing trail segment of the Great Western Trail. Currently there is no public transportation system serving the canyon however a Park & Ride lot and connections to Salt Lake City's excellent transit system are nearby. The Boy Scouts of America, Great Salt Lake Council, operate Camp Tracy which is located adjacent to the road. The camp serves approximately 55,000 campers and leaders annually. Parking exceeds capacity at Camp Tracy and there are safety concerns regarding scouts crossing the road.

The Mill Creek Canyon Maintenance and Protection Fund is operated as a partnership between Salt Lake County and the Forest Service. Visitor fees have been collected since 1991 to restore natural areas, renovate developed sites, and maintain the area. It is from this spirit of cooperation that the Forest Service, Salt Lake County, ant the Great Salt Lake Boy Scout Council have collaborated to address transportation issues in Mill Creek Canyon.

This study will develop several alternatives which will evaluate establishing a shuttle system, developing bike lanes or a separate trail, and managing traffic and parking differently. It will also evaluate options for moving a 1-mile section of the Great Western Trail off the roadway. A preliminary comparison of the environmental effects of alternatives will be developed. Additional study components include a visitor survey and economic analysis.

Mill Creek Canyon Feasibility Study
Project Description

The purpose of this study will be to develop several transportation alternatives for Mill Creek Canyon to reduce impacts of private vehicular travel and provide links to the Salt Lake City public transportation system. The project will also evaluate alternate options for managing traffic on the road to improve the safety and experience of bicycling in the canyon. Additional elements of the study include analysis of parking, reducing congestion at the upper end of the canyon, and developing options for moving 1 mile of the Great Western Trail off the roadway. Parking and safety concerns connected with the Boy Scouts of America's Camp Tracy, also located in the canyon, will be considered.

Several viable alternatives will be developed which will be analyzed in compliance with NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) requirements at a later separate phase. Components of study include:

1. **Transportation Analysis: Conduct a study of existing traffic characteristics, circulation, parking capacity at developed sites and road shoulders, bicycle use, and a transportation demand analysis. This will consider the Salt Lake County roadway and fee booth, National Forest sites and spur roads, the Boy Scout's Camp Tracy, and two private restaurants located in the canyon.**

2. **Visitor Survey: Conduct a survey of visitor recreation patterns, demographics, attitudes towards alternative transportation.**

3. **Transportation Alternatives: Identify a range of alternatives for further study which may consider feasibility of bicycle lanes, shuttle system, parking management needs, and alternate management of traffic on the road system. Alternatives for moving a missing segment of the Great Western Trail off the roadway will also be developed. Provide recommendations for further NEPA analysis to be conducted as a subsequent separate planning phase.**

4. **Preliminary Resource & Visitor Analysis: Generally assess potential environmental resource impacts and affects to the visitor experience associated with alternatives.**

5. **Economic Analysis: Determine costs of transportation alternatives including infrastructure needs, vehicle recommendations, bike lane construction, and off-canyon parking options.**

Alternative Transportation in the Parks and Public Lands
Planning Evaluation Criteria

1. Demonstration of Need

a. Visitor mobility and experience

The upper Mill Creek Canyon (MCC) sub-watershed has a drainage area of 13,915 acres comprised of steep mountain slopes with an elevation range from 5,100 to 10,200 feet. The boundary of Mount Olympus Wilderness parallels MCC Road. Due to their location adjacent to the Salt Lake City metropolitan area boundary, transportation-related issues in the Tri-Canyons (Mill Creek, Big Cottonwood, and Little Cottonwood Canyons) are high. The Forest Service and partners requested technical assistance from an interagency TAG (Transportation Assistance Group) who evaluated the Tri-Canyons and prepared a report titled Transportation Observations, Considerations, and Recommendations For the Tri-Canyons Area of the Salt Lake Ranger District Wasatch-Cache National Forest (2006). The report describes transportation issues as *"myriad and significant (p.5)"* **and recommends** *"...starting with focused planning and analytic efforts in each of the three canyons (p. 11)."* **It further notes:**

> *"MCC and Albion Basin in LCC are prime candidates for which Forest Service leadership and involvement is essential and would be instrumental in stimulating and facilitating potential alternative transportation options (p. 6). One planning initiative should focus on how a corridor management strategy that emphasizes alternative transportation could help preserve the special character, solitude, and user appeal of MCC while accommodating increasing levels of visitation (p. 11)."*

Mill Creek Canyon Characteristics	
Land area	13,915 acres
Road length from entrance booth	8.5 miles
Peak daily 2-way traffic	4,000
Peak hourly traffic	366
Picnic areas	10
Trailheads	12
Restroom buildings	17
Average yearly fee collections	$170,000
BSA Camp Tracy year-round campers and visitors	55,000
Winter road length to gate closure	4.0 miles
Winter groomed ski trail length (above gate)	4.5 miles
Winter ski trail use	250/day

A number of data sources are available to estimate visitation and transportation issues in Mill Creek Canyon. During 2007, the Wasatch-Cache National Forest participated in the Forest Service National Visitor Use Monitoring project which includes data from a number of randomly selected sites in Mill Creek Canyon.

Data was also collected during 2007 from Salt Lake County traffic counters, fee booth car counts, photo documentation, and Boy Scout camp counts. A University of Utah graduate student conducted a project to collect baseline data for this ATPPL grant application titled Preliminary Feasibility Assessment of Transportation in Mill Creek Canyon. This study included a parking inventory, observations of parking demand, bicycle user survey and count, and visitor survey concerning support for alternative transportation (Orme, 2007).

Traffic Congestion

Mill Creek Canyon is a paved 8.5-mile narrow dead-end road under jurisdiction of Salt Lake County through a Forest Service easement. The road accesses numerous trailheads, picnic areas, and day-use sites. Two short narrow spur roads access additional picnic sites. Two small summer recreation cabin tracts are located on the National Forest administered through special use permits. There are 2 private restaurants located in the lower canyon adjacent to the road. Special events such as weddings are often held at the restaurants which contribute to parking problems at times. The BSA Great Salt Lake Council's Camp Tracy is also located in the canyon on private land adjacent to the road. Approximately 55,000 scouts and leaders utilize Camp Tracy year-round for camping and council training activities.

High National Forest visitation along with Camp Tracy visitation, private operations, and bicycles on the road contribute to congestion particularly over weekends and holidays. In recent years, the camp has utilized overflow parking on the opposite side of the road. A pedestrian crosswalk was painted on the road however, the traffic congestion and children crossing the road adds a safety concern at a location where both car and cyclist traffic often exceeds the speed limit.

From November through June, the upper 4.5 miles of Mill Creek Canyon Road is closed. The Forest Service grooms the road as a cross-country ski and snowshoe trail. They also operate and maintain a winter rental yurt located at the top of the canyon. The 4.5 ski trail is extremely popular, with approximately 250 daily users. The groomed ski trail, backcountry ski trails, and the yurt offer convenient recreation opportunities to Salt Lake Valley residents and tourists.

Traffic on the road is heavy, particularly on weekends and holidays. Many cars speed adding to safety concerns. The BSA Camp Tracy experiences 3-4 cars per year crashing through the fence surrounding their property. The volume of traffic and noise is a negative contribution to the recreation experience. The narrow road is also a safety concern especially at the upper end of the canyon where it barely accommodates 2-way traffic. At this location, cars and horse trailers vie for parking space. The canyon is heavily used by bicyclists adding safety concerns for both cyclists and car drivers. Two short spur roads accessing Church Fork and Terraces Picnic Areas are narrow and traffic reaches gridlock at times.

Bicycle Demand & Safety

Mountain bike use on Mill Creek Canyon trails is extremely popular with access from numerous trailheads along the road and adjacent canyons. Due to high trail densities and safety concerns, in 1997 a regulation temporal zoning regulation was implemented limiting bike use on upper canyon trails to even-numbered calendar days. This rationing system has been successful and replicated on other

National Forests. There are several popular circuits that cyclists ride from Big Cottonwood Canyon to MCC then down the road.

Mill Creek Canyon Road itself has become increasingly popular for road cycling with easy access adjacent to the city. Many use the narrow road for training; there are no designated bike lanes. There have been several serious accidents. Traffic density is a concern to cyclists and drivers. During summer 2007, field observations and a survey of bicyclists showed the following (Orme, 2007):

Mill Creek Canyon Road Cycling Survey	
Cyclists concerned for their safety	92%
Cyclists in support of bike lanes	98%
Cyclist count (weekend)	30 – 60/hour

The feasibility and potential environmental effects of bike lanes in the narrow canyon is unknown. In addition to Forest visitors, the Great Salt Lake Boy Scout Council supports a bike lane feasibility study as a potential means of providing healthy access for their campers, reducing automobile traffic, and relieving parking congestion at Camp Tracy. This study will also evaluate alternate methods of managing the road for cycling.

<u>Parking shortages</u>
Parking is a currently a problem on weekends and holidays. Given high projected population growth in the Salt Lake Metropolitan Area, the need to study transportation options in Mill Creek Canyon has become a priority. At times during summer 2007, up to 34 cars per hour were observed turning around at the upper end of the canyon (Big Water Trailhead) for lack of parking (Orme, 2007). Visitors become frustrated and often park illegally which causes a safety concern, resource damage, and a visual quality impact. The Boy Scout Council plans to expand Camp Tracy use in the coming years. They have significant parking shortages as well and have contemplated renting shuttle vehicles to take campers into the canyon.

During winter, the canyon is extremely popular for cross-country skiing and snowshoeing however the amount of snow that can be plowed is not enough to accommodate the number of cars. As a result, cars double-park and park into the roadway. Monitoring during winter, 2008 indicated that trailhead parking lots consistently exceeded their capacity and law enforcement officers needed to increase their focus on parking problems (Orme, 2007).

<u>Destination Access Issues</u>
There are two specific access issues that would also be addressed in this study. The Upper & Lower Big Water Trailheads at the top end of the road are so popular that parking normally exceeds capacity. Two overflow areas have been developed approximately .25 mile below the trailhead. Visitors using these overflow areas are walking up the road thereby creating a safety issue and contributing to traffic congestion.

At this upper end of the canyon, the road itself is designated as a 1-mile segment of the Great Western Trail. The Great Western Trail extends 3,000 miles from Arizona north through Montana. It connects from Big Cottonwood Canyon into Mill Creek Canyon along the popular Wasatch Crest Trail. Because Mill Creek

Canyon Road is congested at the upper end, serves as pedestrian access from overflow lots, and is not a desirable location for this section of the Great Western Trail, this feasibility study will include alternatives for separating traffic near the top of the canyon perhaps through construction of a new trail segment or an alternative means of managing traffic in this area.

Public Transportation Links

Public transportation to MCC is not available although an excellent transit system serves the Salt Lake City Metropolitan Area and a Park & Ride lot is located within 1 mile of the canyon mouth. Providing links to public transit would decrease traffic congestion and enable access to the canyon for economically and physically disadvantaged populations.

A transit system could facilitate travel for 1-way hiking, biking, and backcountry skiing between Mill Creek Canyon and Big Cottonwood Canyon (south) and Lambs Canyon (north). There are several trails linking these canyons but with no public transit, many parties shuttle private vehicles between canyons thereby increasing the number of vehicle trips needed. A transit system, it feasible, could reduce this traffic and associated impacts. A preliminary visitor survey showed that 61% believed a shuttle system is needed while 22% were neutral (Orme, 2007). More data is needed to determine if a system is viable for MCC.

b. Environmental condition as a result of the existing transportation system

Recognizing that current and future transportation issues are of environmental concern in the Tri-Canyons, the WCNF Revised Forest Plan (2003) made important decisions in order to move towards improving alternative transportation. The plan put a cap on development of new parking on National Forest System lands in the canyons unless it may be needed to facilitate mass transit or for watershed protection. The desired condition is that *"Visitors to the Tri-Canyon area will make increasing use of mass transit to reduce congestion on the highways and mass transit will expand to year-round operations (p. 4-162).***" The plan also directs the Forest Service to** *"…work actively with other parties to explore options for reducing private vehicular use within these Canyons (p. 4-162)."*

Air Quality

The towering Wasatch Mountains adjacent to Salt Lake City block the dispersion of air pollutants. During winter, atmospheric inversions often trap pollutants near ground level producing a dense fog-like cover. As a result, the Salt Lake City Metropolitan Statistical Area is frequently ranked near the top of the nation's list for poor air quality for extended periods and health warnings are issued. People seek relief from inversions by driving the short distance up the adjacent canyons where the air is remarkably clear. The air inversion often extends 1-mile into the canyons. Air quality monitoring has not been conducted in Mill Creek or the other canyons. Effects on natural resources are unknown however; with high car counts it is likely that cars have some negative effects traveling to and within the canyons. Air quality in the Tri-Canyons is not currently monitored. Absent data, it can still be inferred that providing alternative transportation in Mill Creek Canyon would have a positive effect on the canyon and Salt Lake City's air quality; particularly during winter.

Noise pollution

Traffic volume contributes noise to the recreation experience in Mill Creek Canyon. While this has not been quantified, it is obvious that at busy times, traffic contributes to the noisy setting visitors seek to escape as they head up the canyon from the busy metro area. It also impacts opportunities for solitude in the adjacent Mount Olympus Wilderness. Decreasing motorized traffic on the road during peak periods would decrease noise pollution throughout the canyon and protect wilderness values.

Vegetation & Erosion

Mill Creek is directly adjacent to the road through most of the canyon. Roadside parking has developed in several places adjacent to the stream causing vegetation loss. The Salt Lake County 2008 Water Quality Stewardship Plan (Draft) identifies increasing pollution from storm water as a stress to Mill Creek. Although the canyon has undergone extensive rehabilitation since implementation of the fee program in 1991, roadside erosion may be a contributor to water quality stressors. The plan recommends several improvements for the riparian corridor such as buffers and sediment basins. Because the Forest Service and Salt Lake County operate Mill Creek Canyon Maintenance and Protection Program, there is an existing partnership to collaborate on riparian protection and transportation improvements.

Watershed

Mill Creek Canyon comprises 18 square miles of watershed drainage and is one of the 7 canyons serving as part of the Salt Lake City watershed. By the early 1990's recreation use had caused significant streambank erosion along the creek, sanitation problems, crime, and issues with dog waste. The canyon had deteriorated so badly that the local Board of Health considered closing it. By 1991, Salt Lake County and the Forest Service established the Mill Creek Canyon Maintenance and Protection Fund whereby visitor fees are collected to operate and maintain the canyon. Much of the denuded riparian area was restored through this program.

Although Mill Creek is not current used for drinking water, it is expected that eventually the City will need to utilize it for drinking water as population increases. It is recognized as a major source of high quality water therefore the canyon is currently designated to be managed with a watershed emphasis through the WCNF Revised Forest Plan (2003). Transportation-related impacts to Mill Creek have not been studied. The road is adjacent to the creek for most of its length. Vegetation loss due to roadside parking and development of overflow parking areas may impact the creek. Automobile accidents occasionally result in cars going into the creek.

Visual Quality

Overcrowded areas and roadside parking have a negative effect on visual quality. The WCNF Revised Forest Plan (2003) identifies all of Mill Creek Canyon to have a "high" (wilderness) or "very high" scenic integrity objective. Providing alternatives to overflow parking would move toward these objectives.

2. Methodology for Assessing - Visitor Mobility & Experience Benefits of Project

The focus of the Mill Creek Canyon Transportation Feasibility Study will be to develop several potential alternatives which would later be evaluated in accordance with NEPA procedures in a separate phase. It is expected that public interest will be high and some alternatives may be complex. Therefore, the study would provide a proposed action and alternatives for further analysis.

a. Reduced traffic congestion

The Transportation Analysis portion of this study will assess current traffic characteristics, circulation, parking capacity at developed sites and road shoulders, and bicycle use. It will include a demand analysis for future transportation needs and how a shuttle system, bike lanes, or alternate management of traffic on the road might benefit Forest visitors and campers utilizing the BSA's Camp Tracy. Each alternative will include estimates of potential traffic reduction.

b. Enhanced visitor mobility, accessibility, and safety

The study will analyze alternatives for improving visitor mobility throughout the canyon via a shuttle system, bike lanes, and other methods. It will also include alternatives for relieving congestion at the upper end of the canyon, such as moving the Great Western Trail off the road, providing a trail link from overflow parking to the trail system and parking management options. The study will consider potential connections to the Salt Lake City transit system which could improve opportunities for underserved populations to visit Mill Creek Canyon. Since Mill Creek Canyon is an 8.5 mile one-way dead-end road, evacuation procedures in the event of fire will be considered in conjunction with a shuttle system. Improving mobility, accessibility, and safety for the BSA's Camp Tracy will be included.

c. Improved visitor education, recreation, and health benefits

If a shuttle system were available, potential links to the existing Salt Lake City transit system might afford others the opportunity to visit the canyon for health benefits. A preliminary survey of cyclists indicated that 92% were concerned for their safety while riding the road and 98% supported bike lanes. All (100%) indicated they would increase their riding to varying degrees if there were bike lanes which would contribute to a health lifestyle (Orme, 2007). It is likely more cyclists would ride in the canyon if bike lanes or safe areas were available thereby increasing health benefits. If a shuttle system were available, there would be greater opportunities for public education in transit. In addition, scouts attending Camp Tracy would have more transit options

3. Methodology for Assessing - Environmental Benefits of Project

a. Protection of sensitive natural, cultural, and historical resources

Study alternatives will examine energy efficiency of decreased vehicle traffic on the road compared to potential use of a shuttle system and increased bicycle use based on models for vehicle emissions. Potential improvements will be listed for

each alternative. The Forest Service will look for expertise via contract to assist in determining how a transit system might affect the carrying capacity of Mill Creek Canyon Road, trails, and developed sites. Alternatives will re-examine the need for overflow parking if a transit system were implemented and might make recommendations for revegetation of segments of the road adjacent to the creek.

While there is a strong desire among cyclists for bike lanes, whether or not they are feasible is unknown. The study will examine needed space and provide a preliminary review of environmental impacts of widening the road or installing a separate trail for bicycles. A Visitor Survey is included in this grant to discern demographics, recreation use patterns, and preferences. The social implications of potentially widening the road to accommodate alternative transportation will be important in assessing impacts to the unique character and "sense of place" Mill Creek Canyon provides to visitors.

b. Reduced pollution

This study will evaluate potential improvements to air, water, visual quality, and view shed for each alternative. Salt Lake City and the State of Utah monitor Mill Creek water quality. It is possible that this data may be correlated with transportation alternatives. Air quality in the Tri-Canyons is not monitored by Local, State, or Federal government. Because there is concern about metropolitan area winter inversions extending polluted air into the canyon mouths, the Forest Service will seek suggestions through this study. Quantifying noise pollution levels with and without car traffic will be included in the study and improvements for each alternative will be estimated. Existing data and photographs will be used to evaluate visual improvements of each alternative.

4. Methodology for Assessing - Operational Efficiency and Financial Sustainability

a. Operational efficiency

The feasibility study will formulate alternatives consistent with the Revised Wasatch-Cache National Forest Plan (2003) which emphasizes protection of the watershed in Mill Creek canyon and collaboration with other parties to reduce private vehicles in the Tri-Canyons. Alternatives will also be consistent with partners' goals such as Salt Lake County and the Great Salt Lake Boy Scout Council. Meetings will be held with recreation cabin permittees and the 2 private restaurant owners to ensure alternatives consider their needs.

b. Financial feasibility

This proposal includes an Economic Analysis which will determine and compare costs each alternative including infrastructure needs, vehicle recommendations, cost of bike lanes, and off-canyon parking options. Economics of the existing fee program and how it might tie to the alternative transportation system will also be studied.

c. Cost effectiveness

The cost effectiveness of each alternative will be considered in the Economic Analysis and will be key in determining which alternative will be brought forward

study as a proposed action in NEPA analysis. Again, consideration of the existing fee program in Mill Creek Canyon will be an important consideration regarding how the operation and maintenance program will be sustained in addition to any transit system.

d. <u>Partnerships and funding from other sources</u>

See attached Letters of Support

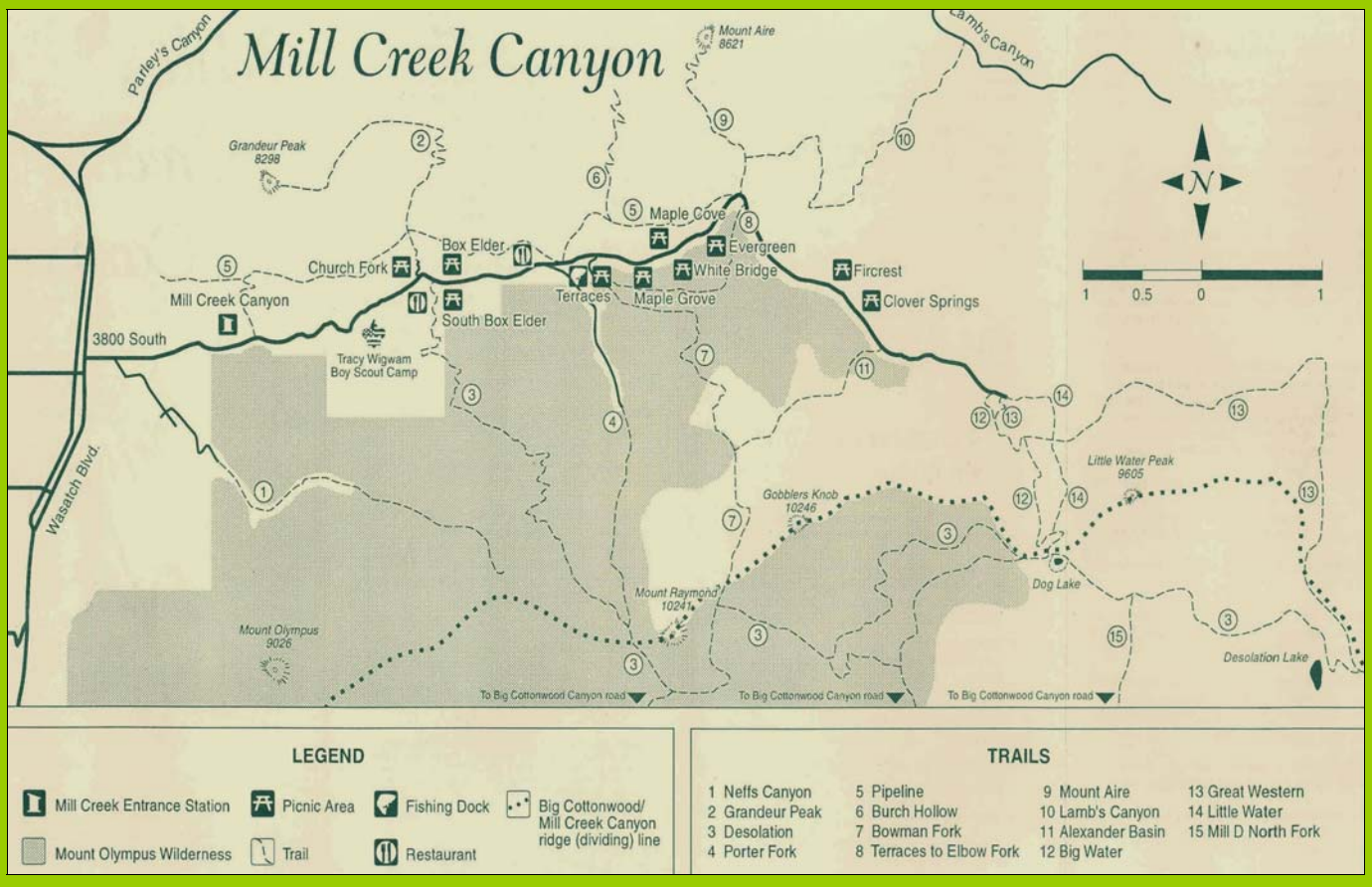
<u>Mill Creek Canyon Visitor Fees = $15,000</u>
There is a history of partnership between the Forest Service and Salt Lake County who jointly established the Mill Creek Canyon Maintenance & Protection Fund in 1991. Mill Creek Canyon Road is administered by Salt Lake County who also operates the fee booth on the road. The County and its employees collect visitor fees which in turn are distributed to the Forest Service for all operation and maintenance work in the canyon. As a result some visitor fees will be committed to this project through labor and field management.

<u>Boy Scouts of America, Great Salt Lake Scout Council = $5,000 (in-kind)</u>
Leadership is concerned about parking, safety, and lack of designated bike access to the camp. They support this study as a way to assist in solving their transportation issues and contribute to reducing traffic in MCC. As a nonprofit, they have offered $5,000 worth of volunteer time to assist in this project. With the number of developed facilities and trailheads in the canyon, the scouts and their leaders may be valuable in assistance with traffic counts.

<u>Salt Lake County = Unspecified</u>
The County supports this application and especially the bicycle component. They have already assisted in the preparation of this application by installing road counters this past summer. Fee booth attendants also keep segmented car counts (e.g. Forest visitors, restaurant, Scout camp) and can contribute as directed for the Transportation Analysis. The County could not make a specific financial commitment at this time because it falls within their following fiscal year although they have stated support through financial and engineering assistance.

ATPPL Planning Project Proposal

Mill Creek Canyon Transportation Feasibility Study



ATPPL Planning Project Proposal

Mill Creek Canyon Transportation Feasibility Study

Mill Creek Canyon is operated through a unique partnership between Salt Lake County and the Forest Service. Visitor fees have rehabilitated the heavily impacted canyon adjacent to Salt Lake City.

The canyon is minutes from 1 million Salt Lake City metropolitan area residents

Big Water Trailheads at the top of the canyon are typically full. On holidays, 34 cars per hour were displaced due to full parking lots.

Overflow parking below Big Water Trailheads causes vegetation loss and the need for people to walk on the road to connect with the trail system. This road section is also designated as the Great Western Trail.

During winter, Mill Creek Canyon Road is gated at 4 miles and groomed for cross-country skiing. As many as 250 people per day use the 4.5 mile trail.

Winter trailhead parking is limited often creating access, safety and enforcement concerns.

SALT LAKE COUNTY

PETER M. CORROON
Salt Lake County Mayor

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Salt Lake City, UT 84190-1020

801 / 468-2500
801 / 468-3535 fax

February 13, 2008

Loren Kroenke
District Ranger
Salt Lake Ranger District
6944 South 3000 East
Salt Lake City, UT 84121

Subject: Alternative Transportation in Parks and Public Lands
Mill Creek Canyon Transportation Feasibility Study

Dear Loren,

This letter serves to confirm that Salt Lake County supports and encourages the efforts of your office in applying for a transit grant through the Federal Transit Agency's Alternative Transportation in Parks and Public Lands program for the Mill Creek Canyon Transportation Feasibility Study.

Salt Lake County is aware of the ongoing problems in the canyon both during the summer and winter seasons. Alternative transportation methods need to be investigated to preserve the integrity of this canyon watershed area as well as provide for a safe roadway system for the many different users of the canyons.

Salt Lake County has an ongoing interest in preserving the integrity of the watershed area and the access to this canyon. We are willing to participate in this study with engineering and fiscal resources as necessary.

Respectfully,

Mayor Peter M. Corroon

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February 12, 2008

Loren Kroenke
District Ranger
Salt Lake Ranger District
6944 South 3000East
Salt Lake City, UT 84121

Re: Mill Creek Canyon Transportation Study - Issues/Support

Dear Loren:

The use of Mill Creek Canyon is vital to all aspects of scouting in Great Salt Lake Council: ie: adult training, youth training, day camps for Cub Scout and Webelos age boys, Winter Camp, and much more. Over the years to come we are expecting to continue to expand our use of the canyon. Currently we provide program activities for over 30,000 youth and 6,000 adults during the summer camping window, and nearly that many again throughout the other nine months of the year.

An issue of concern to us is the risk of injury to our participants and others from the increased traffic flow up and down the canyon. We have been fortunate to date, but want to be pro-active to ensure safety precautions are put into place.

We would welcome your input on what ought to be done. If a feasibility study of some sort needs to be done, perhaps our scouts or camp staff personnel could be involved in counting cars, helping to access parking needs etc.

Ultimately, we want to provide the safety net necessary, so all who journey up or down the canyon can do so safely.

Thanks for your consideration.

Fred Jepsen
GSLC Director of Properties

Great Salt Lake Council
Boy Scouts of America

United Way
United Ways of Utah

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FS MOU No.:	07-MU-11041901-034
County Contract No.:	MJ3003C
MOU Expiration Date:	September 30, 2012

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

between

Contract MJ3003C
Salt Lake County

USDA FOREST SERVICE
Wasatch-Cache National Forest
Salt Lake Ranger District

and

Salt Lake County
(Mill Creek Canyon Management)

This **MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)** is hereby entered into by and between the **USDA Forest Service, Wasatch-Cache National Forest**, **Salt Lake Ranger District**, hereinafter referred to as the **Forest Service**, and **Salt Lake County**, hereinafter referred to as the **County**.

A. PURPOSE:

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding is to provide a framework for continued cooperation in managing Mill Creek Canyon. This cooperation serves the mutual interest of the parties and the public. The common goal is to manage the Mill Creek Canyon ecosystem for improved water quality, watershed condition, streambank stability, and riparian and wildlife habitat while providing superior recreation settings for the benefit of the general public and residents of Salt Lake County in particular.

It is the intent and agreement of the parties that this Memorandum of Understanding shall, upon signing and execution, replace and supersede the prior Memorandum of Understanding, 91-MU-11041901-050 (County Contract #MZ2116C), between the parties dated February 27, 1991.

B. INTRODUCTION:

Historic Forest Service funding levels have proven insufficient to provide for visitor needs and resource protection in Mill Creek Canyon. The County and Forest Service have made significant achievements since establishing a partnership and implementing a visitor fee program in 1991. Through the fee program, recreation facilities have been renovated, improved, and maintained to high standards. Resource damage has been minimized despite increased visitation. Fees have been used as a source to leverage funding for grants to assist in major capital improvements that would not be accomplished by Mill Creek Canyon revenue alone.

FS MOU No.:	07-MU-11041901-034
County Contract No.:	MJ3003C
MOU Expiration Date:	September 30, 2012

This unique and successful partnership between the County and the Forest Service continues to receive national recognition and serves as a model of intergovernmental cooperation for other areas. Continued cooperation is needed to manage this heavily-used recreation resource immediately adjacent to a growing metropolitan area.

C. STATEMENT OF MUTUAL BENEFIT AND INTERESTS:

Although considerable improvements have been made through this partnership since 1991, intense public use of recreation facilities, trails, and the stream contributes to water quality deterioration in Mill Creek and adversely affects watershed condition causing vegetation loss, soil compaction, erosion, sedimentation, and water quality impairment. Stream channel instability may adversely affect the Mill Creek Canyon Road, which is maintained by the County.

The County, by virtue of its responsibilities for water quality, public safety, transportation, and county-wide recreation settings, and the Forest Service, by virtue of the National Forest System lands it manages in Mill Creek Canyon, have a mutual interest in the protection and management of the Canyon. These interests include the restoration and maintenance of high water quality, a healthy canyon ecosystem, enjoyable recreation settings, and safe, clean, and well-maintained recreation facilities.

In consideration of the above premises, the parties agree as follows:

D. THE FOREST SERVICE SHALL:

1. Provide planning, staffing, supervision, and daily operations for all activities on National Forest System lands in Mill Creek Canyon to the extent funds are available from the Mill Creek Canyon Protection and Maintenance Fund. This includes daily operations, maintenance, enforcement, purchasing, contracting, equipment, supplies, public information, and long-range restoration and improvement projects.

2. Prepare a separate Collection Agreement between the County and Forest Service describing how funds will be collected and disbursed. Bill the County as described in the Collection Agreement.

3. Prepare an Annual Operating Plan (Financial Plan) and submit it to the County by September 1 for the following fiscal year (October 1 – September 30). Expend funds, as outlined in the plan, for resource protection, operations, and maintenance with consideration of special needs, emergencies, or opportunities that may arise.

4. Maintain a collections account for deposit of its portion of funds contributed by the County.

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E. THE COUNTY SHALL:

1. Administer a program to collect a Mill Creek Canyon visitor fee and deposit fees into the Mill Creek Canyon Protection and Maintenance Fund. Details of fee collection and disbursement are described in a separate Collection Agreement prepared by the Forest Service.

2. Staff and operate the fee booth within the County road easement.

3. Print and sell annual passes.

4. Reserve and collect fees for the group picnic sites and winter yurt and provide a copy to the Forest Service prior to the reservation date for site preparation.

5. Assist the Forest Service in the development and prioritization of projects for the Annual Operating Plan and for long-range planning.

F. IT IS MUTUALLY AGREED AND UNDERSTOOD BY ALL PARTIES THAT:

1. REVENUE. The revenue generated from this program shall be expended to pay costs for the following activities as described in the Annual Operating Plan:
   a. Fee booth operation, fee collection, permit printing and distribution, and public information items.
   b. Annual and recurring facility and trail operations and maintenance.
   c. Watershed assessments and improvements, streambank stabilization, and revegetation.
   d. Recreation facility improvement, renovation, and replacement.
   e. Public information and education including signs, maps, displays, interpretive programs, and enforcement.

2. WATERSHED PROTECTION. The County and Forest Service agree to manage the area as a potential culinary water supply for Salt Lake City and to control non-point sources of pollution to the extent feasible. Recreation shall be controlled to best prevent impacts to water quality. This includes the placement and maintenance of restrooms, control of domestic animal wastes, maintenance of a healthy riparian area around the stream, and other appropriate best management practices.

3. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT (FOIA). Any information furnished to the Forest Service under this instrument is subject to the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552).

4. PARTICIPATION IN SIMILAR ACTIVITIES. This instrument in no way restricts the Forest Service or the County from participating in similar activities with other public or private agencies, organizations, and individuals.

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5. COMMENCEMENT/EXPIRATION/TERMINATION. This MOU takes effect upon the signature of the Forest Service and the County and shall remain in effect through **September 30, 2012.** This MOU may be amended upon written request of either the Forest Service or the County and the subsequent written concurrence of the other(s). Either the Forest Service or the County may terminate this MOU with a 60-day written notice to the other(s).

6. RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARTIES. The Forest Service and the County, and their respective agencies and offices, will handle their own activities and utilize their own resources, including the expenditure of their own funds, in pursuing these objectives. Each party will carry out its separate activities in a coordinated and mutually beneficial manner.

7. PRINCIPAL CONTACTS. The principal contacts for this instrument are:

Forest Service Project Contact	**County Project Contact**
Carol Majeske	Wayne Johnson
Recreation Manager	Park Operations Manager
Wasatch-Cache National Forest Salt Lake Ranger District	Salt Lake County Parks & Recreation
6944 South 3000 East	3383 South 300 East
Salt Lake City, Utah 84121	Salt Lake City, Utah 84115
Phone: (801) 733-2662	Phone: (801) 483-5473
FAX: (801) 733-2684	FAX: (801) 483-5479
E-Mail: cmajeske@fs.fed.us	E-Mail: wjohnson@co.slc.ut.us

Forest Service Administrative Contact	**County Administrative Contact**
Marci Bodell	Wayne Johnson
Grants and Agreements Specialist	Park Operations Manager
Wasatch-Cache National Forest	Salt Lake County Parks & Recreation
8236 Federal Building 125 South State Street	3383 South 300 East
Salt Lake City, Utah 84138	Salt Lake City, Utah 84115
Phone: (801) 236-3416	Phone: (801) 483-5473
FAX: (801) 524-3172	FAX: (801) 483-5479
E-Mail: mbodell@fs.fed.us	E-Mail: wjohnson@co.slc.ut.us

8. NON-FUND OBLIGATING DOCUMENT. Nothing in this MOU shall obligate either the Forest Service or the County to obligate or transfer any funds. Specific work projects or activities that involve the transfer of funds, services, or property among the various agencies and office of the Forest Service and the County will require execution of separate agreements and be contingent upon the availability of appropriated funds. Such activities must be independently authorized by appropriate statutory authority.

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This MOU does not provide such authority. Negotiation, execution, and administration of each such agreement must comply with all applicable statues and regulations.

9. ESTABLISHMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY. This MOU is not intended to, and does not create, any right, benefit, or trust responsibility, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or equity, by a party against the United States, its agencies, its officers or any person.

10. AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVES. By signature below, the County certifies that the individuals listed in this document as representatives of the County are authorized to act in their respective areas for matters related to this MOU.

THE PARTIES HERERTO have executed this instrument as of the last written date below:

SALT LAKE COUNTY

PETER CORROON
Mayor or Designee
Salt Lake County

Date: 12/11/07

USDA FOREST SERVICE

for FAYE L. KRUEGER
Forest Supervisor
Wasatch-Cache National Forest

Date: 12/31/07

STATE OF UTAH)
: ss.
County of Salt Lake)

On this 11 day of December, 2007, personally appeared before me Doug Willmore, who being duly sworn, did say that (s)he is the Chief Administrative Officer of Salt Lake County, Office of Mayor, and that the foregoing instrument was signed on behalf of Salt Lake County, by authority of law.

[SEAL]

NOTARY PUBLIC
Residing in Salt Lake County, Utah

KAREN R. LOWE
NOTARY PUBLIC - STATE OF UTAH
2001 S. STATE STREET N-2100
SALT LAKE CITY, UT 84190
My Comm. Exp. 01/08/2010

THE AUTHORITY AND FORMAT OF THIS INSTRUMENT HAS BEEN REVIEWED AND APPROVED FOR SIGNATURE
Marci Bodell 8/29/2007
AGREEMENTS COORDINATOR DATE

APPROVED AS TO FORM
Salt Lake County District Attorney's Office
By
Deputy District Attorney
Date 9.21.07