

For Immediate Release
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Race to Protect Crucial Open Space at Base of Little Cottonwood Begins
Saving Key Bonneville Shoreline Trail Access Hangs in the Balance of Utah Open Lands Success

Twenty-six acres of land that includes a valuable link in the Bonneville Shoreline Trail will be developed if Utah Open Lands is unsuccessful in raising the funds to secure the key foothill property. The land, currently subject to a development agreement with the City of Cottonwood Heights, rises from Wasatch Boulevard providing a stunning view on the entry corridor to Little Cottonwood Canyon.

Discussions with Rola V Ltd and LC Canyon Partners LLC have resulted in a small window for Utah Open Lands to raise the funds to purchase this land for conservation. Should the organization fail to meet a March 20th deadline to raise half of the \$3,000,000 purchase price, plans to develop 11 lots on the hillside will move forward.

“Our discussions lead to the landowners willingness to consider a conservation solution for this property which includes a critical link along the Bonneville Shoreline Trail” said Utah Open Lands Executive Director Wendy Fisher. The canyons are often considered Utah’s calling card for visitors and residents alike for the unparalleled recreational opportunity within minutes of Utah’s largest metropolitan area. Development pressures on foothill properties limit access and open space adjacent to public land. Instead of the impending development Utah Open Lands envisions the protection of this 26 acres as a keystone parcel for protecting a stunning scenic viewshed and valuable recreational experience.

Utah Open Lands secured a \$500,000 grant from the State’s LeRay McAllister Critical Lands Fund, but will need cities along the Wasatch Front to aid in a solution that would keep this land as open space. Support from the community will be critical in demonstrating the public support for this project. “All donations will go 100% to the purchase of this land and every dollar will demonstrate to city, county and agency officials that protection of this land is a priority” said Fisher.

The landowners have invested substantially in developing the property and without a community effort the land will be developed. Fiduciary obligations to their partners and work already completed toward developing the property made a possible sale for conservation unlikely.

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Utah Open Lands applauds the landowner partnerships for being willing to not only consider providing Utah Open Lands with time to raise the necessary dollars, but also the willingness to take less than the appraised value. We discussed the fact that this would be a huge fundraising task,” said Fisher “and we were grateful that they were willing to look into making a partial donation of value to lower the purchase price” said Fisher

“Fundamentally, some of the partners think that preservation of this landscape would be a value to the community, which is why we were willing to have a discussion with Utah Open Lands regarding preservation options.” Said Grant Kesler, Manager of LC Canyon Partners. “Not everyone of the landowners is in favor of preservation, but we are all willing to give Utah Open Lands the opportunity to purchase the property” continued Kesler. UOL has until the construction season begins.

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Bonneville Shoreline Trail - Cottonwood Heights Project

