

**Grand Canyon Working Group
Fifth Meeting
May 31 – June 2, 2006
Chaparral Suites
Scottsdale, Arizona**

Summary of Discussion and Agreements Reached

Facilitators/recorders: Lucy Moore, Ed Moreno, Tahnee Robertson

Members Present:

Lynne Pickard, FAA, Working Group Co-chair
Karen Trevino, NPS, Working Group Co-chair
Bill Austin, US Fish and Wildlife Service
Marklyn Chee, alternate for Alan Downer, Navajo Nation
Mark Grisham, Grand Canyon River Outfitters Association
Elling Halvorson, Papillon Airways
Dick Hingson, Grand Canyon Trust and National Parks and Conservation Association
Stacy Howard, alternate for Heidi Williams, Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association
Cliff Langness, King Airlines, Inc. and Westwind Aviation
Edmund Tilousi, alternate for Roland Manakaja, Havasupai Tribe
Doug Nering, Grand Canyon Hikers & Backpackers Assoc.
Jim McCarthy, Sierra Club
Alan Stephen, Scenic and Grand Canyon Airlines, Inc.
John Sullivan, Sundance Helicopters, Inc.
John Timmons, Air Transport Association
David Yeaman, Grand Canyon Private Boaters Association
Charlie Vaughn, Hualapai Tribe
Heidi Williams, Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association

Superintendent's Chair:

Joe Alston, Grand Canyon National Park

Member/Alternate Absent:

Bob Henderson, alternate for Alan Zusman, Naval Facilities Engineering Command
Leigh Kuwanwisiwma, Hopi Tribe

Summary of Agreements:

Consensus: Meeting Summary # 4 was approved as corrected.

DAY ONE:

Welcome and Introductions: Lucy Moore welcomed members, alternates, staff and observers to the fifth meeting of the Grand Canyon Working Group. She introduced Robyn Moore-Johnson, an attorney and mediator from Dallas, who is part of a project with Lucy where mediators learn from each other by observing processes. All present introduced themselves. Paul Hoffman explained that although he has a new position at the Department of Interior, Division of Administrative Services,

he will still be working on certain projects, including this one. He has a vested interest, he added, in seeing the process succeed.

Approval of Meeting Summary: Because many had not had a chance to read the summary carefully, its approval was postponed to Day Three.

Facilitator Remarks: The facilitation team spoke with several members following the last meeting for guidance on how best to proceed with the development of proposals and recommendations. The majority felt that it was important to "get to work" and to "settle down with maps" and begin exchanging ideas. Although there is uncertainty about the role of the commercial airlines, while the group waits for more detail on the management of the National Airspace System (NAS), most thought that progress could be made dealing with other segments of aircraft. Some asked for clarification of the definition of "substantial restoration of natural quiet" and of the role of the GCWG in the NEPA process before proceeding. The agenda, Lucy said, was designed to address those two requests, as well as to provide significant time for exploration of specific proposals.

She also addressed issues of facilitator bias that were raised to her at the last meeting, and then raised with Mike Eng of the US Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution following the meeting. An air tour member and a tribal member believed that facilitators had acted unfairly against their interests. Lucy apologized for any inappropriate actions, and explained that facilitators, like other human beings, can suffer from frustration, weariness and lapses of various kinds. She assured the group that she and her team are in no way biased, and that their reputations in fact depend on their neutrality. She asked any member who felt treated inappropriately or unfairly to speak up immediately so that she and her team could respond and remedy the problem right away.

Lucy reminded the group about the role of observers. Members at the table may recognize staff or observers in the audience whom they believe have something to contribute.

Agenda Review: Members reviewed the agenda. The definition of "air tour-related" was added in the afternoon of Day One. In answer to a question about additional proposals, the Hualapai representative said that his tribe would not be making a proposal in this forum, but might discuss route changes over the reservation during the government to government consultation process. He added that Hualapai may withdraw as a cooperating agency in the NEPA process, but would remain an active member of the GCWG.

Another member asked that the Group consider meeting without the agencies, an idea raised at the last meeting. He explained that this was not an attempt to go behind closed doors, but simply an effort to have productive, creative discussions. He asked if there was a response from the agencies' counsels on its legality. Both attorneys answered that as long as decisions were not made on behalf of the GCWG there would be no legal barrier to such discussions.

Review of Task List from Previous Meeting: All tasks from the previous meeting had been completed, or were ready for presentation at this meeting. Members were notified by email that the INM 6.2 model was released for public use on May 22. Some members requested on a sign-up sheet a paper or CD copy of the Appendix to the Data Points Summary (over 60 pages).

Update Scope of Work and Timeline: Lynne and Karen observed that the group is still close to the original schedule created for the first meeting. However, the schedule shows the group

wrapping up recommendations at the July meeting, which looks problematic to Lynne. Karen noted we will need to update the timeline and have consistency with the NEPA timeline. We should have a better sense of timeline revisions after the July meeting.

NEPA: Barry Brayer and Grace Ellis presented the draft summary of the 1,267 comments received during the Scoping Process. They reassured the group that no late comments were accepted; there was a lag while comments were being posted to the website (www.dms.dot.gov) Volpe prepared the summary for use by the GCWG. Barry admitted that it is rough and imperfect, but hoped that it would give members a sense of the kind and range of comments. The agencies are in the process of hiring a contractor to read and address every comment.

A member expressed dissatisfaction with the process of handling the comments. He felt it was inappropriate for Volpe to be the recipient of the comments, rather than the DMS site. Not all comments from his company were included in the summary. The summary may be a good start, he said, but it is not complete and therefore is misleading. There are several comments, for instance, that imply that air tours are not safe, but other positive comments related to air tours are not included. "No air tour accident has ever occurred within SFRA, and to imply that air tours are not safe is not right." He had read every comment scanned into the website, and felt that the summary was not a fair representation of the full range of comments. He urged all members to read the comments themselves, and become knowledgeable firsthand.

Barry responded that it is not unusual to use a contractor for the compilation and summary of comments. Members asked if the agencies read all the comments, suggesting that some of the comments were extremely important for the agencies, not just the contractor, to read and understand. Karen added that the NEPA team will read every comment, and agency staff will read many of the comments, as well. Lynne answered that she has read select comments that were sent to her directly. Barry will distribute to members CDs with all comments in their entirety. Grace added that the full comments would be in the appendix of the Draft EIS as well.

The Hualapai member said the summary did not fairly assess the Tribe's comments, that the essence was lost. He also requested that the tribal comments be segregated from the other comments, and that they be distinguished one tribe from another. The agencies asked the tribal representatives to alert the NEPA team if they did not want their comments made public.

An air tour member was upset that inflammatory and potentially damaging comments were made about his company in some of the comments. He asked if the NEPA process could refute those comments publicly. Barry answered that in the next few weeks the NEPA team would look into these comments. Disparaging comments about any company or entity are not deleted from the record, but all comments will be addressed. The operator asked that misleading statements be corrected. Barry added that the operator would also have the opportunity to make further comments in the record about those comments. By nature, he said, comments are a reflection of what someone believes, and are not necessarily accurate. The agencies cannot ignore or delete any comment, even if it is inaccurate.

The Hualapai representative was upset about the misinformation disseminated concerning the recent tribal administrative flight in National Canyon. The flight, authorized by the tribe and conducted by Sundance Helicopter, was for the purpose of counting bighorn sheep. Emails misidentified the flight as an air tour and implied that the tribal land was Park land. The emails caused distress both for the

tribe and the company. The representative requested that NPS make a public comment correcting the misinformation, since the defamatory emails had been sent to high officials at NPS. This issue spun out of control, he said, and it is important that everyone understand how the process of administrative flights works. Normally, he said, the tribe notifies NPS in advance of each administrative flight. This may not have happened in this case, but that was no excuse, he added, for the tribe and the company to be libeled.

Joe Alston replied that there were many things that could have been done differently. In this case, the Park knew nothing about the flight, and Alston has no control over what the public writes to the Park. "A phone call would have resolved the issue," he added. "We did nothing to inflame the issue, and have no interest in doing so." An environmental member noted that the erroneous email was followed by several others that explained the truth about the flight. "Word did get out," he said.

The Hualapai representative reminded the group of the sovereignty of the tribe and their right to conduct the flights, and asked that those comments critical of the tribe and the company be redacted from the summary of comments. Lynne replied that it is not possible to redact some comments and not others. The member who brought the original email to the attention of the group acknowledged that this is all a process of education. He appreciates the concerns on both sides, and added that being able to read comments at least brings to light important issues. Lucy reminded the group that the summary of comments is not an official document, merely an internal tool to help the working group. If it seems not to be useful to the members, they may ignore it.

Grace presented the proposals matrix to the group, explaining that it is a format for presenting the proposals raised by the GCWG and other options that must be addressed during the NEPA process, like the no action alternative, the 1994 recommendations and the unimplemented East End proposal. She urged the group to feel free to raise as many ideas as necessary during this period. The alternatives will be analyzed in terms of a long list of impact categories, including noise, socio-economic, visual, cultural, air quality, water quality, and other impacts. A member asked to see the list of impact categories for evaluating the range of alternatives. [This was distributed later in the meeting, and is available on the website.]

Q: Would the increase in number of commercial airliners be included in the "no action" alternative?

A: Barry answered that NEPA is triggered when a government agency makes a decision, and an increase in flights would not be considered a government decision. Tina Gatewood (FAA) added that the NEPA no action alternative includes projected future growth.

Q: Is national security one of the criteria?

A: Karen answered that the Department of the Interior (DOI) and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) have identified "icon parks" where increased security measures are required. Grand Canyon is not on this list.

Q: If relevant new information were brought forth after the Scoping period was closed, would it be considered during the analysis?

A: Yes. Barry replied that there will be other opportunities for public comment, when the Draft EIS and even the Final are issued, for instance. Furthermore, if the agencies and contractors believe new information is relevant, they will consider it outside of these official comment periods. Karen added that the agencies have continuing responsibility to deal with

significant, new data, even beyond the date of the record of decision. Anyone who has such data can contact the NEPA team at any time.

Tribal Consultation: Jan Balsom reported on the Pan Tribal Consultation meeting held April 19. Havasupai, Navajo, Hualapai, Hopi and Zuni attended of the eleven tribes invited. She reminded the group that there are four opportunities for tribal involvement in this subject: Section 106, as cooperating agency for the NEPA process, on the GCWG, and in the government to government consultation.

The agencies had a follow-up meeting with Hualapai at Peach Springs. The representative added that the tribe's comments and proposals will be submitted to FAA in the consultation process. Jan confirmed that the tribal council may choose to withdraw as a cooperating agency. Additionally, the agencies reported that follow up meetings will be held with the Havasupai Tribe and Navajo Nation in mid-late June.

The Navajo representative said that the tribe is still working on comments, and that so far the working relationship with the agencies is good.

Update on Section 7 Consultation on Overflights: Bill Austin, USFWS, explained that Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act addresses the impacts to listed species as a result of federal actions. The ongoing discussions with FAA and NPS currently focus on updating the progress since the flight rules consultation in 1999-2000. He expects a report soon from the agencies describing reasonable and prudent measures that have and will be implemented. A new consultation will begin informally, as Austin reviews proposals and makes comments on behalf of the ESA. A formal consultation on the GCWG recommendation will be initiated by the request of the agencies, and will allow 135 days for the USFWS to produce a Biological Opinion (BO). He suggested amending the NEPA timeline process to include that 135 day period.

Amy Heuslein, BIA Western Regional Office, said that the BIA will be a cooperating agency for the EIS. She added that there should be BIA and tribal participation in the Section 7 ESA consultation process. She also mentioned Secretarial Order 3206 (June 1977) that offers an additional opportunity for tribal involvement. The order provides for training for tribes on ESA compliance and how it affects the tribal trust resource, and requires the USFWS to notify tribes on the Section 7 process and the federal action that would affect the tribe. She offered her offices to consult with tribes and the agency on Section 7.

Administrative Record: Eric Elmore, FAA counsel, explained the administrative record to the group. Because the GCWG is developing materials that will be considered by the agencies in making decisions, those agencies are responsible for keeping a record of all documents relating to that decision making process. He admitted that it was not always clear what goes into the administrative record, but the question to ask is: Is it relevant to the decisions you are trying to make? All substantive discussions about noise impacts, air traffic, NAS efficiency, etc. are probably relevant. Where to go to dinner is not relevant. In between is a large gray area, which includes the National Canyon emails. The FAA believes this email traffic is not relevant because it is not related to decisions on route changes; NPS may disagree. Ultimately, the agencies determine what makes up the record. The summary of comments for the use of the GCWG, Lynne said, would not be part of the record in her opinion. Karen suggested that documents might be subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) even if they were not part of the administrative record. The Hualapai

representative said that some information relating to the tribe's 7711 flights is proprietary because it may identify cultural properties. He does not want this information to be FOIA-able. Eric explained that if those documents were FOIA-ed the proprietary parts could be redacted before release. An air tour operator agreed that any information that would lead to locating cultural sites would make those sites vulnerable. The Hualapai member was also concerned that 7711 permit information was scheduled to be distributed to the GCWG later in the day. (A private discussion with FAA staff assured him that there was no proprietary information on the chart, which was distributed.)

Discussion of Several Issues: An air tour operator was concerned about which flights were captured on the peak day and how they were categorized. Lynne and Norm answered that the noise analysis captures all flights (including the 7711 flights) on the peak day, but may have missed VFR GA flights through the corridors. The air tour and air tour related data was collected with the cooperation of the operators and the Hualapai tribe, and includes over the edge and river rafting pull out flights. The operator wanted to be sure that air tour operators were not "taking the hit for" administrative flights or other exempt flights. He asked for a legal opinion from NPS on segmentation and the legal responsibility of the air tour industry. Karen agreed and suggested that it might be necessary to capture other flights for noise analysis for purposes of NEPA. Eric added that the agencies and the working group have done a good job gathering data, but that everything cannot be captured. He is comfortable that what is missing does not compromise the work of Volpe. He expressed sympathy for the operators who believe that they have achieved substantial restoration of natural quiet within their segment of aviation, but he reminded them that the statute is not broken down into segments. He believes there is not a legal basis that prevents air tour operators from taking a "greater hit" for noise caused by other segments of aviation.

An environmental representative said the group should focus on whether the Park is in compliance with substantial restoration, not whether air tours or other segments of aviation are in compliance.

Another air tour operator expressed the dilemma: "Legally we're in a box." He guessed that legislation would probably be needed to resolve the situation, and added that the group either needs to work around the problem or dispose of legislation first.

An environmental member asked the group to consider at some point the categories and make up of the peak day, for the sake of future calculations.

Q: Does the ATMP Act of 2000, section on the Grand Canyon, which calls for establishment of routes for quiet technology aircraft require the GCWG to include quiet technology routes in its recommendations? Would the agencies be in violation if these routes were not included?

A: Eric answered that the 1987 Overflights Act governs this process. Hopefully, the GCWG process will meet the requirements of the 2000 ATMP Act, but if it does not, it will be dealt with elsewhere. Lynne added that her intent was for quiet technology to be part of this recommendation. Barry added that the scoping process includes the quiet technology provisions of the ATMP Act.

MITRE Presentation: Lee Brown, Gabriela Marani, and Thor Abrahamsen, from the Airspace and Airport Analysis Team of MITRE, gave a presentation demonstrating the tools available to describe and analyze impacts to the National Airspace System (NAS). MITRE is a federally funded research and development center, working for government agencies (FAA, DOC, IRS) and nonprofits to address issues of critical national importance. They provide engineering and information technology to facilitate the deep analysis of highly complex questions. They said that it

is important to know what the group needs from MITRE and how they want it presented. The more information they can have at the front end, the better. Funding for the GCWG work is a fifty/fifty cost share between FAA and NPS.

Thor, project team manager for large-scale enroute projects, said his understanding was that the first proposal for analysis involves impacts to the NAS of creating a flight free zone over the eastern portion of Grand Canyon, and that depending on those results there may be additional runs.

There was discussion about the size and shape of the box used by MITRE. The box used in the demonstration was essentially the polygon proposed by Dick Hingson, but with the corners squared off. Concern was expressed that the MITRE analysis "box" had become thereby considerably enlarged, relative to the smaller polygon originally proposed. Thor added that any size box can be used, but he needs exact coordinates of longitude and latitude to create the polygon ("box with corners cut off") that the group wants to use.

Members asked about the ability of the MITRE tools to translate minutes and miles into dollars. MITRE staff answered yes, that very generally the cost of a one minute delay or one extra mile was \$ 1 million per year (in old fuel prices). The actual calculations are, of course, much more detailed. A member pointed out the difference between a minute's delay in leaving or arriving, and a minute longer in the air. The latter, he suggested, would be a legitimate cost. The former should not include capital outlay costs that would not be affected by an earlier or later arrival. MITRE will use professionally-accepted economic measures in the analysis that are transparent to the group.

Lynne described the next steps for MITRE. The high altitude subgroup will confirm parameters, such as the size and shape of the polygon. MITRE will come back with results to the group, and may be asked for more detail depending on the results. Lynne suggested adding the capability to assess components of the flight-free proposal, such as removing flights into/out of southern California, Las Vegas arrivals/departures, or north/south traffic, within the polygon. This could allow more information to be provided faster, rather than sequentially. Dave asked for an analysis of restriction of night flights only within the polygon.

The MITRE team presented two demonstrations – one showing FAA route departure procedures and the other showing different routes, with additional mileage, etc. The Hualapai representative remarked that more air traffic would be put over the Peach Springs VOR to avoid the Park, to which he would object.

Q: Do the demonstrations include military flights?

A: Yes.

Q: Where did the Hualapai land jurisdiction information come from?

A: Thor answered the data came from the Census Bureau.

Q: Can we see the impact of changing just one track?

A: It is easier to remove all flights for a specific location or destination; it is more difficult to analyze many different scenarios.

Q: What impact will the expansion of LAS have on the Hualapai?

A: Lynne answered that there will be a full public EIS process associated with the expansion.

Q: When will we see relevant data?

A: Thor answered that this would depend on the complexity and mitigation required, but that they could probably have some preliminary data by the July GCWG meeting.

Q: How is rerouting done?

A: Lee answered that MITRE would use navigational aids. If the plane were using satellite navigation instead of ground-based, the reroute may be closer to the polygon and minimize the distance traveled.

Q: Is there an environmental process for route changes?

A: Lynne answered that FAA reviews environmental impacts under NEPA.

Q: What is the role of National Transportation Safety Board?

A: Only to investigate accidents.

Q: Can there be a different operational regime for day and night activity?

A: Yes.

Q: Can the tools account for additional fuel expended and noise created at landing and take off?

A: Yes. Lee added that any re-routes could be fed into the noise model.

Q: Can the model deal with fuel burn rates, the impact on air quality of increased emissions, and the cost associated with that pollution?

A: MITRE tools do not calculate burn rates, which require a much more detailed analysis that accounts for type of equipment, etc. Although it would be possible to do that analysis, it would be very time consuming, and seemed to staff to be beyond the needs of the group. Quantifying the impact on air quality would not be possible with MITRE's tools. Lynne added that air quality impacts on the ground are not a concern with aircraft at altitudes above the mixing height. FAA and NPS have already reviewed this issue in connection with the ATMP program and are in agreement.

Definition of Substantial Restoration of Natural Quiet: Members discussed the feasibility and desirability of changing the definition, which was posted on the wall:

“Substantial restoration requires that 50% or more of the park achieve ‘natural quiet’ (i.e., no aircraft audible) for 75-100 percent of the day.”

Lucy reminded the group that definitions could be clarified and discussed by the group, but that a recommendation to change a definition could only be made by consensus of the group. Following that recommendation, the agencies would follow the usual process for such changes, including notice publication, comment period, etc.

The group asked for clarification from the Park Service on the meaning of "or more" in the definition. Some members expressed the need for certainty to meet the standard in the definition before any discussion of changes in the status quo could begin. "We have to have a definition. How can we do anything if we don't know where the goal is?" There was concern that the bar could move unpredictably as a result of administrative changes at NPS or the park itself. This uncertainty, they said, makes business planning difficult and puts companies at risk.

The NPS has the authority to change the definition, but to date they have not, acknowledged a member. He requested a legal analysis of the meaning of "50% or more," and added that his company was ready to hire environmental attorneys for the task. He asked the FAA to do the same.

Members cited legal opinions where "50% or more" was interpreted as "50%." Others pointed to citations in the 1994 Report, and also the Executive Summary for the 1995 Report version, that show the intent at the time was to exceed the minimum numbers "50% of the park" and "75% of the time." Language included "64% of the park restored 75 to 100%" of the time by the year 2010, or in another section "44% of the park 100% of the time," or "65 % of the park 87.5 % of the time," (or, alternatively as ranges: '50-80% of the Park, 75-100% of the time.) At this point, Jim McCarthy distributed a detailed paper, documenting this point. A member went on to say that in his opinion "substantial" means in large part, "restoration" means better than it was at that time, and "natural quiet" means no audible human-made noise. He emphasized that not all these goals should be implemented, but they should at least be on the table for discussion. These were recommendations that were never implemented, and deserve consideration in his opinion.

The Hualapai representative expressed concern that changes in air tour or commercial routes would result in an increase of noise over Peach Springs and other Hualapai lands. He added that there was significant noise that is not being considered in this process, from motorcycles, trains, cars and other human-made sources. Finally, he said that in his view the standard to meet was 50% and that the air tour industry had already met it. He added that he was comfortable with the current definition as long as it did not contemplate 80% or higher.

An air tour representative said that he had accepted the definition as written, and had believed that the definition would not change during this process. He pointed to changes in the noise landscape since 1994, changes that have significantly reduced noise. Now, science tells us that we as an industry have exceeded the goal, he said. His company and others have suggestions to improve the situation beyond the status quo, with quieter aircraft, route modifications, and more. But to undertake these additional improvements, the goal must be clear and fixed, he added. Another air tour representative agreed that the industry is willing to make changes. "If we're in compliance, let's make it better." If the target is floating between 50% and 80%, he added, he was unable to discuss changes.

The NPS representative agreed that the definition as written has not changed. The agency is constrained by the statute, she said, but she hopes that the group can "be creative and get out of the box."

The FAA attorney was asked his opinion. He said that if the standard of 50% of the park 75% of the time were met, the minimum requirement of the law would be achieved. He added that "this doesn't mean it's static, that once you've met those numbers you're done." He suggested that the Park Service was intending to build in some kind of buffer to accommodate changes in the future. In response to a question, he said that although he could understand the position of the air tour industry that they have achieved natural quiet, the law requires that all aircraft be considered together. "You're one peg in this entire board, and you have to suffer the consequences of the rest of the board." Air tour representatives said that the attorney's clarification of the definition matched the analysis of their attorneys.

Another member summed up the situation: air tour is in compliance, commercial and military can't be changed, Hualapai is a sovereign nation and cannot be regulated for noise. "Do we really want everything to stay just the way it is?"

An air tour representative pointed out that if the industry had restored 54% of the park on the busiest day of the year, every other day of the year would have an even higher percent restored. Slow days would be far above the minimum. The court's decision to use peak day instead of average day made reaching the standard that much harder for the industry.

The park superintendent acknowledged the problem faced by the industry if the goal is "creeping up," but he wanted the group to understand that he was unwilling to see it "dumbed down" so that the group ceased to strive for improvement beyond the 50% minimum. He pointed out that the recommendations must stand up to legal challenges. This means that NPS must be consistent in its policies, and that the solution must make sense. He added "I'm here for a solution, and I think we're close." The NPS representative agreed. She said that the recommendations should give stability and security to the businesses operating at the park, and that they should also provide for improvements in the future. If the phrase "or more" is problematic, she believed there was a way to express that same need differently.

An air tour representative said that he was comfortable with the "50% or more" if it was understood that 50% is the minimum standard. He added that his company would "do our very best to continually improve the sound issues with new equipment, quieter equipment, whatever we can figure out in the future."

Consensus Proposal: The facilitator asked the members to consider the following statement for consensus:

"The numbers stated in the definition (50% of the park and 75% of the time) represent the minimum achievement of the goal. All members are willing to work together toward improvement beyond those numbers, understanding that achievement of natural quiet beyond those minimum numbers has been a longstanding goal of the Park Service and remains a goal."

Discussion on Consensus Proposal:

An environmental representative suggested that the goal be 65% of the park 87.5% of the time, since those numbers are mid-points in the ranges identified in the Executive Summary introducing the 1995 Report to Congress. The NPS representative preferred to use a range of numbers to leave the park flexible to adapt to changes that might occur in visitor patterns, wildlife uses, etc. She said she would commit not to push the goal to 80% if the industry would not keep it at 50%. The FAA representative saw the statements as guiding principles for how to proceed. She felt that adding numbers to the statement would not be productive.

Although some recommended that the group set the consensus statement aside and begin to work in small groups on routes changes, etc., the facilitator pointed out that some were unable to move forward without the security of a clear definition. She suggested the consensus statement was an expression of the principles to guide the group's work, and that it was an attempt to reconcile competing needs that may not be that far apart.

An air tour industry representative added that he needed at some point to have a discussion on the definitions of "day" and "air tour-related" as well. [On Day Two, this member withdrew the request to discuss the definition of "day."] Another member urged consideration of the clarification of the definition expressed in the consensus statement, above, saying that other definition issues could be discussed later.

An environmental representative expressed serious concerns about the statement. He said that supporting the proposed language could be seen as compromising the existing definition, and weakening the environmental position. As representative of his organization's membership, he said that at this time he could not support it.

The facilitator asked for a show of hands to indicate the need for a clarified definition before moving on. There were a significant number of "yes's." The group agreed to take up the issue in the morning.

Criteria/Needs/Guidelines: The facilitator distributed cards for members to list criteria they would use in evaluating the proposals shown on the matrix for route changes. Members handed in the cards, and facilitators worked overnight to create a single list, which was distributed in the morning. This document is attached at the end of this summary.

OBSERVER COMMENTS:

Roxanne George, Sierra Club: Roxanne expressed appreciation for the hard work of the group. She reminded the group that the numbers in the definition are just numbers, and that they do not necessarily reflect the experience of the visitor on the ground.

DAY TWO:

Lucy Moore called the meeting to order and asked members to recess to their respective caucuses (air tour industry, environmental, etc.) to re-consider the definition issues raised the previous afternoon.

Reports from the Caucuses:

Inter-agency Caucus: Joe Alston reported on the discussion within the FAA/NPS caucus. He acknowledged that the 1994 Report has become a symbol for many in the industry, and in the Park Service as well. It represents a period when the Park Service spent a great deal of thought and energy on the question of aircraft noise at the park. But, he said, he does not want the report to become an obstacle to productive negotiations. There are important elements that the park will continue to promote – the heart of the park concept, a decrease in fragmentation, and others. The park also is committed to a safe and viable air tour industry. Air tour operators may find a comfort level in language in NPS concessionaire contracts, i.e., the Secretary [of the Interior] won't do anything inconsistent with a company's reasonable opportunity to make a profit. The need to include commercial aircraft and to not adversely impact the NAS has created a conundrum for all of us, he said. NPS continues to recognize the sovereignty of tribes, and includes this as a guiding principle. He said he hoped that the group could eventually reach a set of recommendations by consensus, and he would do everything he could to promote that goal. He would like to move on to putting proposals on a map and getting agreement. If the consensus of the group includes changes in legislation, route structures, or whatever, the park will be supportive.

Environmental Caucus: Jim McCarthy reported on the discussion, although he was reluctant to be the spokesperson because the nature of the caucus was very informal. He said he was concerned that the consensus proposal drafted the day before was an effort to change the definition, something that his constituency has always opposed. He admitted the definition is not perfect in his mind, that it is inconsistent with the law and that it represents degradation rather than restoration. But he urged the group to leave the definition as it stands, and to move on with consideration of the proposals raised at the last meeting. He withdrew his request to clarify the definition of "or more" by adding numbers.

Air Tour Caucus: John Sullivan spoke for the air tour caucus, which, like the others, does not want to change the definition. Their interest is in clarifying its meaning, so that there are not 19 different interpretations operating. Although some at the table may be able to deal with abstractions, his industry needs hard numbers that are based in science. He and others cannot go forward without agreement on the definition, but once that is accomplished, he sees opportunity for real progress.

The facilitator agreed that the consensus proposal did not constitute a change in the definition, but simply a clarification. She asked what more was needed in the way of clarification.

The Hualapai representative supported the consensus statement, without further clarification of the meaning of "or more."

The air tour industry asked for a statement from the park superintendent. After another brief caucus, Joe Alston spoke for the Park Service. He reaffirmed his statements from the day before. The goal of the park, and he hopes the goal of the GCWG, is to find a solution that protects the park resources, tribal interests and responds to the need for a viable air tour industry. He added that the 1994 Report is not currently the proposal of the Park Service, although it was in 1994. He clarified the definition by saying that the numbers 50% and 75% represent the minimum acceptable achievement of the goal. The group will need to develop an alternative that can "pass the red face test with the public that this is the best alternative."

The operator wanted to be sure that air tour operators were not "taking the hit for" administrative flights or other exempt flights. He asked for a legal opinion from NPS on segmentation and the legal responsibility of the air tour industry. Karen agreed and suggested that it might be necessary to capture other flights for noise analysis for purposes of NEPA. Again, said Alston, "we don't want to be in a situation where we are agreeing to a series of minimum definitions. At the same time, we recognize that the air tour industry doesn't want to face the potential of changing definitions to maximum numbers as specified in the 94/95 report, when there might be a solution that protects park resources, tribal interests and responds to the need for a viable air tour industry."

Those who needed clarification of the definition were satisfied with the superintendent's statement. The air tour operator with questions about the definitions of "day" and "air tour-related" agreed to postpone that discussion until later in the meeting. He suggested that the GCWG divide into two groups, one to focus on the east end and one on the west end. This would enable several members to continue east end discussions that were begun following the March meeting. To update the rest of the members, he described their process. Two small groups, with some overlapping membership looked at the proposals that Jim, Dick and Elling presented at the last meeting, reviewing one issue at a time. Last night the two groups met together. They found potential in several areas. The discussions, he said, have been very cordial and honest, with participants identifying areas that can't

be negotiated and others where there is a potential for trade-offs. A recreation representative added that it was a "safe environment in which to change my mind," where positions espoused do not end up in any record. Others echoed that comment. Although the group has reached no firm conclusions, there have been good exploratory conversations on a wide range of issues, including curfews, routes, ceilings, quiet technology incentives, seasonality, a single noise standard, the use of a 12-hour day, information dissemination, training, and legislation.

The group decided to divide into two subgroups:

West End Group: Charlie Vaughn,* John Sullivan,* Cliff Langness,* John Becker, Brenda Halvorson,* Mike Patton, Wynona Sinyella, Waylon Honga, Amy Heuslein (absent)

Because there were no representatives of the ground visitors on the subgroup, the facilitator asked Roxanne George,* alternate to Jim McCarthy, to attend.

East End Caucus: Elling Halvorson,* Alan Stephen,* David Yeamans,* Mark Grisham,* Doug Nering,* Jim McCarthy,* Marklyn Chee,* Dick Hingson,* Craig Sanderson

Paul Joly and Ken McMullen were identified as useful resource people for the groups and were invited to drop in and out of the meetings or be on call as needed by the groups. The groups decided that the co-chairs should not attend the subgroups at this time unless requested. The USFWS representative and other agency staff were invited to attend as observers if they wished.

Volpe Presentation: Cyndy Lee reported the results of the model runs requested at the last meeting. She noted that results are reported in normal miles, rather than nautical miles, for easier comprehension by the public.

* denotes GCWG member or alternate

Noticeability runs:

Running the air tour and air tour related scenario using noticeability for the entire Park (i.e., adding 10 decibels to the entire Park, rather than using the dual zone standard) would increase the air tour and related contribution to substantial restoration from 53.9% to 63.1% of the Park.

Lowering Dragon Corridor by 1,000 feet produced less difference than expected (a 25% time audible contour over 46.1% of the Park compared to 45.6% with the 1,000 lower altitude) because the additional noise generated by the power for the aircraft to climb back to a higher altitude countered the noise benefit gained.

Lowering by 2,000 feet resulted in 46.1% compared to 45.4%.

The 25% time audible contour showed little change.

Some recommended pursuing discrepancies between these results and the earlier sensitivity results on lowering altitudes.

Grid Point analysis:

Grid point analysis showed time audible reductions of up to 200 minutes by dropping 2,000 feet in some places.

Discussion:

A member asked for noise analysis of some changes to routes that use more terrain shielding. A member suggested that VOLPE run new longitude and latitude points behind ridge points, to help better understand impacts to trails and water holes. Another suggested looking at the impact of quiet technology aircraft. Cyndy reminded everyone to submit proposals to the noise screening group.

A member pointed out, that although lowering flights shows some impact on audibility, there are some sharp rises in the Lmax at 96 Mile Camp and Tower of Ra. Another pointed out the discrepancy between runs at 90 mile and 11 mile.

Cyndy noted an error in the legend relating to Lipan Point runs she'd sent to Dick Hingson per his request for the original maps used in her March presentation. The legend was correct in the March presentation, but not in the original maps. The March presentation has been posted on the website.

7711 Presentation: Paul Joly and Sarah Falzarano:

[Following a private discussion between the FAA and the Hualapai representatives concerning proprietary information, the tribe withdrew objections to the distribution of the handout accompanying the presentation.]

Prior to the presentation the member from Hualapai reminded the group of his tribe's position that all flights landing or departing tribal land are exempt.

FAA 7711 Waiver Process:

Paul explained that the number 7711 refers to a number on an FAA form. The 7711 waiver process is intended to provide certain unique flights with relief from specific regulation in a manner consistent with safety. The waiver does not waive any state or local ordinances. Typical flights receiving 7711 permits include: parachute jumping in congested areas, speeds over 250 mph under 10,000 feet, banner towing, aerobatics, aircraft lighting, visibility requirements, special equipment, etc. Deviations from approved routes or altitudes in the SFRA require a 7711 waiver. The Hualapai member added that helicopters are the safest, most efficient craft for both medivac rescues and wildlife counts.

Gathering the information for the presentation was difficult because the FAA keeps records of the applications and permits in a variety of locations. The presentation included all the permits that Paul was able to locate, and he believes it represents the waivers that exist today.

Expiration: There was discussion about expiration of permits and enforcement. Some were concerned that many permits are left on the books, although the need seems to have disappeared. Paul responded that the primary purpose for the authorizations is to assure that anyone operating under that authorization will do it in a safe manner. It is difficult to know precisely when a need has disappeared. A tribe may have several operators they need to be able to call on short notice for services, but may prefer to call only one, almost exclusively, at the present time. For this reason, most 7711 SFRA authorizations are issued on an open-continuous basis, to be reviewed approximately every two years for any obvious indications that would preclude their continuance. If there is a violation, the FAA can immediately revoke a waiver.

Notification: Although there is no requirement for the pilot to notify FAA of each flight, he/she is required to notify NPS prior to flying over park land. NPS and Park members expressed frustration

that they are not receiving these notifications. The FAA representative said he would look into this issue, but that there may have been no notifications because there may have been no such operations for quite some time, nor have any suspicious flights been reported over park lands. NPS and park staff understood that they would be consulted during the application process, included in the approval of the waiver, and would be informed by someone before each flight. Without any data, the assumption may be that these are unauthorized air tours. The FAA stated that their Grand Canyon Procedures Manual requires that any application proposing operations that would fly over GCNP would be coordinated with the NPS. Both agencies agreed to verify the existing communications protocol, clarify any misunderstandings that may have developed relating to 7711 waivers and flights, and cooperatively address possible lack of pilot pre-notifications to NPS. The Hualapai representative said the tribe intends to offer some ideas on the consultation process.

There was discussion about how to avoid the National Canyon situation where recreational users were surprised by a Hualapai administrative flight. In response to a question, the FAA representative said he thought the situation could be much improved with an increased awareness of both the types of 7711 activities typically conducted, and the process. This education, he suggested, would lessen the presumption that any stray helicopter is conducting an illegal air tour. An operator added that he rarely used his 5 waivers (for backcountry research), and that over many years these flights have encountered visitors only once or twice.

Impact of 7711 waivers on the SFRA: The park superintendent expressed concern that the 7711 waivers may result in modification the SFRA. For instance, when helicopters use a waiver to leave Green 4 at the extreme west end of the park and land on Hualapai land, a route has been created to the airport that is not on maps. An FAA staff member answered that the waiver only allows for a departure from the route to descend and land down on the river. An operator added that the Green 4 included exits in the past to allow for these flights, but when they were removed from the chart, a 7711 waiver became the only way of leaving the route. Another suggested putting the exits back on the map, thus eliminating the need for a waiver. Other flights, like the elevator flights supporting the pontoon operations at Grand Canyon West are not within the SFRA.

Another member was concerned that the permits might be used to increase the number of air tours. Paul said that FAA does not entertain 7711 permits to backdoor air tours. An operator cannot establish a new tour route in the Canyon through the waiver process.

Q: Do waivers expire?

A: Paul answered yes, either through a fixed date, or an open-continuous period subject to periodic review. A filming project, for instance, would have a fixed end date whereas medical evacuation and law enforcement operations would be open continuous.

Q: How many flights are represented by each waiver?

A: Paul answered that there is no way of tracking that information.

Q: Where is the application decision made?

A: Paul answered that the decision is made usually at the local FAA level.

A: Are those receiving waivers informed about existing corridors, flights, etc.?

A: Yes, the person approving the application requires the applicant to take the appropriate steps necessary to assure that all mandated training is accomplished and all safety related information is disseminated and adhered to.

NPS Administrative Flights: Sarah Falzarano described the NPS administrative flights, all of which are governed by 7711 permits. These waivers cover a variety of activities including water quality testing, rescue, and research. To minimize noise over the park, NPS uses quiet technology aircraft, primarily the MD 900 as well as the Bell 407. Many of the flights relate to emergencies, such as fire and search and rescue. Other flights are for maintenance of pipelines, buildings or trails and for resource management, including wildlife surveys. Prior to flights, the agency conducts an in-house evaluation and Minimum Requirements Analysis (MRA) asking can this task: be done outside wilderness, be done in some other way, be done to conform to park goals. The flight must be justified beyond saving time for the staff. The superintendent participates in the approval process.

There were no NPS administrative flights on the peak day 2005. Flight hours last year exceeded 400 hours, which includes travel outside the park, for firefighting in other states for instance.

Q: How will the NPS administrative flights be calculated in the noise analysis? Is there a seasonal fluctuation?

A: Ken McMullen answered that the administrative flights are included in the current condition scenario in the NEPA process. The NEPA document will attempt to calculate average hours by season, for instance reflecting a likely increase during fire season.

Quiet Technology Tables: Norm Elrod presented two tables (already sent to GCWG), showing the impact of quiet technology by area and hours, on the east and west ends. The tables, he explained, were an alternative way of viewing old information.

Review Breakout Groups: Members exchanged views on the breakout groups that met on the second day. There was agreement that it was productive and encouraging to talk about specifics with respect to air tours operations. There had been some confusion about the role of agency staff. Breakout group members clarified that staff are welcome to be present, but should not "tell us what's possible and what's not possible." Another said that what was important was the informality and the small size of each group, not who is there.

Definition of Air Tour-related: At the request of the West End breakout group, Paul Joly summarized the discussion, focusing on a recommendation for categorizing air tour-related flights in the west end. An environmental member of the breakout group required assurance that all noise from all aircraft would be included in calculations in order to consider reclassification. The proposal from the west end group was as follows:

- 1) Air tour
- 2) Air tour-related (maintenance, training, repositioning, transportation leg back home)
- 3) Transportation (where purpose of flight is moving from point "A" to point "B")
- 4) Hualapai support (Bar 10, exempt flights, elevator flights)

Discussion:

A member noted that some transportation flights are at relatively high altitude – under 18,000 feet.

There was discussion about the definition of an air tour. An operator suggested that an air tour includes narration during the flight, is marketed and flies at a lower altitude. An observer read Part 93.303 of the Grand Canyon overflight regulations, which defines a commercial air tour to include: for hire, with the purpose to sight see, holding the service out to the public, providing a narrative that refers to points of interest, maintains a certain frequency and route, and more. An operator suggested that flights designed to transport people to and from river trips, such as the Bar 10 flights or the elevator flights, would not be considered air tour flights. A recreation representative was troubled by the fact that the definition depends on what goes on inside the plane, as opposed to the impact on the ground visitor.

Another wondered if these new categories would have implications for caps or for noise modeling? Agency staff answered that air tours are capped, but transportation flights are not. These categories would not change those caps. A member wanted assurances that all aircraft – no matter what category -- would be counted when substantial restoration is calculated. A member added that the noise modeling currently includes air tour-related flights, and that he believed that air tour-related and air tour should be counted in the air tour category. If Hualapai and transportation flights are included in the noise modeling, they should not be "charged" to the air tour category, he added. The East End group agreed to take the recommended categories under consideration.

An observer suggested that budgets be established for caps and for noise.

DAY THREE

The GCWG met in the two breakout groups identified the previous day. Following those sessions, members returned to the plenary.

East End Group: Doug Nering presented on behalf of this group. The group had discussed several potential changes to air tour operations. They will request noise model runs on the following: [see attachment at end of summary, East End Modeling Scenarios, for more detail.]

- Current fleet mix – with dogleg to west, at current altitude
- New dogleg route with QT only
- New dogleg route at 1000 feet lower (current tour fleet)
- New dogleg route QT only at 6500 feet
- Current route QT only at 7500 feet
- Three Zuni model runs (to be discussed)

Also discussed were:

- Nankoweap area -- change further south
- Impact on boating community at the Lower Colorado River confluence
- Seasonal route changes at Zuni and Dragon (Quiet Canyon Coalition proposal)

The group will ask FAA to perform a safety analysis on the proposed seasonal changes. The Navajo member also has concerns about the impact of seasonal closures on local economic development plans. Lynne reminded the group to be sure to specify in writing (email is fine) their requested noise model runs, and submit those requests to the screening group [Lynne, Alan, Dick, Ken, Kurt]. Cyndy said she would need 1-3 weeks to do the runs. Lynne said she would follow up on the safety

5th MEETING FINAL SUMMARY, APPROVED BY GCWG AT JULY 25–27, 2006 MEETING

analysis request. The East End Group wants noise and safety analysis feedback to inform their next steps.

West End Group: Those in the West End breakout group suggested that their work would be more efficient with an agenda in advance for each session and a neutral facilitator/note taker. East End participants agreed.

Approval of Summary of Meeting # 4, March 20 –22, 2006: The group reviewed the draft summary of the last meeting and approved it as corrected. The Navajo member asked that the record show that any comments made by Navajo observers at the last meeting, or any future meeting, are not made on behalf of the Navajo Nation. Navajo Nation President Joe Shirley designated Alan Downer as member to the GCWG. Mr. Downer has appointed Marklyn Chee to sit in his place as an alternate and to be the sole spokesperson for the Navajo Nation in this process. Mr. Chee assured the GCWG that his office is working closely with both the President's office and the leadership at the chapter level.

Consensus: The GCWG approved by consensus the draft summary, with corrections for the fourth meeting, held March 20-22, 2006, in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Next Meetings: The group reviewed the dates already established for the next two meetings:

**July 25 – 27, 2006 -- in Flagstaff or Phoenix [Phoenix later selected]
September 27 – 28, 2006 – location to be determined.**

Summary prepared by Lucy Moore Associates. Please contact Lucy with any comments or corrections. 505-820-2166, or lucymoore@nets.com

East End Modeling Scenarios

The East End Working Group developed adjustments to the Dragon and Zuni flight corridors that might improve ground visitor experience at Grand Canyon. While these adjustments have not been agreed to, the East End Working Group unanimously has recommended that they be modeled as a necessary step in evaluating what might be gained if they are adopted.

The principal changes to the Dragon and Zuni Flight Corridors are (1) to add a dogleg to the Dragon south-end entry/exit point to move the flight path approximately 2.0 miles to the west of the existing entry/exit point and away from the Park boundary road (2) to relocate the existing air tour route around the Nankoweap Basin at the north end of the Zuni Corridor several miles to the south. Both changes potentially could benefit popular hiking areas, notably Hermit's Basin and Dripping Springs now impacted by the Dragon and Nankoweap Mesa a wilderness area adjacent to the Zuni Corridor that is accessible year-round.

The East End Working Group has developed actual route modifications and if the changes are accepted for modeling, then Volpe will be provided the actual lat/long data for the new flight paths. The East End Working Group also wants to determine how lowering the air tour flight path in the Dragon by 1,000 feet (from 7,500 MSL to 6,500 MSL) reduces aircraft audibility by taking advantage of terrain masking.

In addition to route modifications, the East End Working Group unanimously agreed that the modeling also should be done to determine what benefits can be achieved by converting all air tour operations on routes utilizing the Dragon and Zuni to quiet aircraft only.

Baseline Information

The modeling that exists expresses the air tour impact area of Grand Canyon National Park in percent time audible with the threshold of 25 percent or greater as unrestored. Currently about 850 square miles, or 46 percent, of the entire Park is unrestored. The changes to be evaluated are being made solely to routes in the Dragon and Zuni Flight Corridors located in the eastern 1/3 of the Park. Thus the baseline information may be better presented as, and the changes evaluated by, percent time audible in the eastern 1/3 of the Park rather than the entire park. By so doing then the issue of “air tour” versus “air tour and air tour-related” is eliminated, as there were no air tour-related flights on the routes using the Dragon and Zuni on the peak day in 2005. It is believed that the model can present the data either way, as a percent time audible of the entire Park or the eastern 1/3 of the Park, with no extra model calculating time.

Volpe has modeled in general sensitivity testing in January what benefit might be expected if all air tour operations over Grand Canyon were flown by quiet aircraft. That result showed great promise, reducing the area exceeding 25 percent time audible by about 180 square miles. That sensitivity testing was at the macro level; this request for additional modeling would show the benefit to be gained by quiet aircraft operations in the Grand Canyon specific to the Dragon and Zuni flight routes.

Modeling has also been done with respect to lowering the altitude flown in the Dragon by 1,000 and 2,000 feet respectively using 2005, peak day flight activity that included the mix of conventional and quiet aircraft that actually flew that day. Lowering the Dragon by 1,000 feet gained 11 square miles of restoration while 2,000 feet gained 17 square miles.

What Baseline Data is Needed?

The Volpe model is believed to have already calculated all the required baseline data although it may not have yet been presented in the most efficient form for evaluation. For example lowering the Dragon flight altitude by 1,000 feet restored 11 square miles of the Park, a very small percent of the entire Park but a significant improvement for the area impacted by the Dragon. Up for discussion is then the best way for the baseline to be presented so that the proposed changes can be most accurately assessed.

The Baseline is thus the actual 2005, peak day air tour activity flown on all the air tour routes that utilized either or both the existing Dragon and Zuni that day, existing route altitudes and existing mix of conventional and quiet aircraft.

New Modeling

The variables to be modeled are (1) the dogleg in the Dragon, (2) the dogleg in the Dragon with the flight altitude lowered by 1,000 feet and (3) what is gained under (1) and (2) if all operations are flown by quiet aircraft. Finally, as discrete model runs, the East End Working Group wants to evaluate the route change in the Zuni to better protect Nankoweap Mesa, first with the current fleet mix of conventional and quiet aircraft and then flown by quiet aircraft only. Some of this new modeling may not show large improvement in the amount of area restored as for example the dogleg proposed for the Dragon. Gains in the Bright Angel Flight-Free Zone likely will be offset

by some loss in the area now protected to the east of the Dragon. The East End Working group recognizes this. The goal of the dogleg is to better protect the Hermits Basin and Dripping Springs and to determine whether relocation can take advantage of terrain masking.

Existing Baseline Models:

Existing Dragon routes, current altitude, current fleet mix
Existing Dragon, 1,000 foot lower altitude, current fleet mix

New Modeling:

Existing Dragon, current altitude, all quiet aircraft
Existing Dragon, 1,000 lower altitude, all quiet aircraft

Dragon with dogleg, current altitude, current fleet mix
Dragon with dogleg, 1,000 lower altitude, current fleet mix

Dragon with dogleg, current altitude, all quiet aircraft
Dragon with dogleg, 1,000 lower altitude, all quiet aircraft

Proposed Change to the Zuni:

Model existing Zuni, existing fleet mix
Model existing Zuni, but all quiet aircraft

Model new Zuni, existing fleet mix
Model new Zuni, but all quiet aircraft

Other Factors

The East End Working Group agreed that the modeling should also evaluate changes in audibility at specific grid points (similar to what Volpe did in its presentation on lower operating altitudes in the Dragon). The East End Working Group also felt that before any changes to the routes utilizing the Dragon and Zuni are made, based on model results, that those model results be validated by actual field observation.

**Grand Canyon Working Group
Fifth Meeting
May 31 – June 2, 2006
Phoenix, AZ**

Tasks and Data Requests

- Amend NEPA timeline re ESA consultation (Bill)
- Revise GCWG timeline as needed (Lynne and Karen)
- Send Volpe baseline noise analysis appendix to those who signed up (Tahnee) (asap)
- Send all scoping comments to members, on CDs (Barry) (asap)
- Members submit requests for Volpe to model runs to the screening sub-group (6/26)
- Members submit requests to High Altitude sub-group (Lynne) for proposed MITRE runs (limiting commercial at night, polygon of no flights, etc.) (6/19)
- Discuss money for MITRE (Lynne and Karen) (asap)
- Finalize March meeting summary, distribute to members (Lucy) (6/9)
- Prepare agenda for next meeting, distribute to members (Lucy) (7/10)
- Prepare draft summary from May meeting, distribute to members (Lucy) (6/30)
- Settle meeting locations for July and September (LMA w/ agencies) (asap)
- Forward Congressional letters to Barry/Tina for NEPA administrative record and to members who requested copies (Tahnee) (asap)
- Resolve how transfer of GCWG documents to NEPA record will be done (NEPA team) (asap)
- Specificity of request on safety analysis on seasonal changes to Zuni and Dragon to Lynne (Jim/Alan) (asap)

5th MEETING FINAL SUMMARY, APPROVED BY GCWG AT JULY 25–27, 2006 MEETING

- Requests to Stacy for additional survey information from GA pilots traversing the Canyon (members)
- 7711 flights -- improve interagency communication/coordination (FAA/NPS)
- Legal opinion from NPS on segmentation and the legal responsibility of the air tour industry (Carla)

GCWG Member Priorities (May 31, 2006)

Instructions: While working with the matrix and map/overlays, try to come up with solution ideas that satisfy as many of the priorities below as possible.

Definition

- Tie down definition of restoration of natural quiet

Routes

- If there is a well-defined, final definition of substantial restoration of natural quiet, can support:
 - combining Blue Direct Routes
 - closing Fossil Corridor
 - raising ceilings on all FFZ, except Sanup
 - route changes
 - altitude changes
- Re-routes on tribal lands depends on tribal consultation (i.e., PSG and TBC navigational aides)
- Altering air routes must thoroughly assess impacts on Hualapai, including mitigation
- Solution is over entire park not just SFRA

Altitude

- Apply only to aircraft flying below flight level 18,000

Time-Related

- Seasonal
 - Flight free season over east end (weeks, months)
 - Not contain a seasonal component for GA operations and access
- Curfews
 - Extended curfews (particularly at annual times where they now give only a 15-90 minute interval pre-sunset)
 - Curfews that allow silence in all the park during “sensitive” times (sensitive can include seasonal post-sunrise and pre-sunset times)

Site Specific Protection

- Strong mitigation, if not silence, over *historic* vista sites such as Point Sublime, North Rim, and *historic* trails such as Hermit and *historic* East Park
- To be able to do a 5-mile hike in the Canyon without hearing an air tour other than the Kaibab and Bright Angel Trails
- No air tours over the Heart of the Park

Noise Reduction

- Meets minimum standard for substantial restoration
- Cut back noise to the point of being reasonable (beyond current situation)

General Aviation

5th MEETING FINAL SUMMARY, APPROVED BY GCWG AT JULY 25–27, 2006 MEETING

- Provide GA access to the Grand Canyon Airport from all directions in all weather
- Permit VFR GA traffic to overfly the Canyon at reasonable, easily achievable altitudes (10,000 MSL and above)

Air tour industry

- Provide viable air tour industry
- A good experience for the air tour visitor
- A move towards quiet technology

Accountability

- Ongoing monitoring and reporting to verify compliance
- Identify triggers when we'd have to revisit
- Maintains aviation safety
- NPS must publish schedules, locations and other information about aircraft noise

Unique Tribal Relationship

- Acknowledge the unique relationship the Park has with the Navajo Nation and the Hualapai Tribe
- Proposals should be reviewed, however, final decisions should not be made until tribal consultations are completed

Endangered species

- Relation of the components to listed species occurrence and the possible effects of the components on listed species