

2020 USAC Board of Directors Candidate Statements

Byron Gunderson (Current and Founding Member)

I am really not the kind of fly fisher that deserves to be inducted. I guess I was nominated because of my past history of working to introduce fishing to kids, for serving on councils and boards as an advocate for fishing and caring about preserving Utah's access to her natural resources. I was a founder of USAC and have continued to serve on the board since. What USAC has accomplished thus far is truly amazing. We couldn't have done it without our incredible lawyers. In my eyes, they have done it all. We on the board have been there to give them support and get the word out to others who care. We are close to victory and I would appreciate it if you would allow me to continue to serve on the board to see this through. Thank you all for being part of USAC.

Ryan Houk (Current Board Member)

My name is Ryan Houk, I am 36 and have been fly fishing for as long as I can remember. I grew up next to Deer Creek reservoir fishing the Provo and Weber rivers. I have fished all over this country and around the world. My dream has always been that someday my home state of Utah would embrace fishing and river recreation like some of the some of the most prominent and successful places on earth have. I have been involved with USAC since the beginning. I was a plaintiff in the Provo case and testified in court for two or three days about my experience growing up fishing our home waters and how that experience has been degraded by our legislature taking away our access rights in the name of land development and the wealthy's property rights. If selected to the board I would bring this knowledge and experience along with my thorough understanding of boundary law and property rights that I have gained over the last 10 years of being a professional land surveyor. I think that Utah's rivers and streams are some of our most valuable assets and it is my goal to help USAC fight for the rights of everybody to be able to have access to these assets. Cheers.

Tara Olson (Prior Board Member)

My name is Tara Olson and I'm a former Board Director of USAC. Up until a year ago, My husband Kris and I were residents in the great State of Utah for over a decade. I was dragged kicking and screaming (ok, I'm exaggerating) to Austin, TX for Kris' medical residency. We both grew up in Idaho with a deep passion for the outdoors and that passion has only grown stronger since moving away from the mountain west. I'm patiently counting the days until we can return home. Professionally, I am a Master of Public Administration graduate and a public policy advocate with a strong legal background. I have been a member of the Utah Stream Access Coalition since it's inception, served as secretary for 6 years, and served as a board member for 5 years. Even while I'm in Texas, I will continue to help in any way I possibly can until our access to Utah's rivers and streams are restored. I have many skills to bring to the USAC Board of Directors including nonprofit management, project management, event planning, public

speaking, writing, marketing, and fundraising experience. Most importantly, I have a passion for making our rivers and streams publicly accessible for not only us, but future generations to come. As Texas is largely privately owned and water access limited, it fuels my fire even more to fight for restoring stream access back home so we all can enjoy what's rightfully ours.

Cullen Battle

As a board member, I believe I could help USAC in the following areas: extending the principles of the Weber River navigability ruling to other qualifying waters in Utah; evaluating any legislative proposals to resolve the stream access issue in Utah; background support for the Provo River litigation (given that I have retired and am no longer serving as counsel in that case); networking and sharing legal and legislative strategies with stream access groups in other states; developing good internal governance and decision-making procedures within USAC.

Professional Background:

Natural resources attorney practicing in Salt Lake City 1981-2018. Retired. Lead counsel for USAC in USAC v. Orange Street Development (Weber River navigability case.)

Other public interest groups represented during my career: Nature Conservancy, Grand Canyon Trust, Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance, National Audubon Society.

Additional Boards and Committees I have been involved with include: Utah Reclamation Mitigation and Conservation Commission, 1999-2003 Utah Solid and Hazardous Waste Control Board, 1999-2004 Salt Lake City Public Utilities Advisory Committee, 2002-07 Soldier Hollow Legacy Foundation 2002-2017.

John Sparger

I have been a member of USAC practically since its inception. Participating in many different fund raising, and political functions. I have been involved in the fishing industry for 12 years now as a Guide on the Green. I am looking forward to remaining active with USAC as we get closer to getting our ruling in from the Supreme Court, and participating in the process that is to follow. Especially if that process is to work with landowners to find new access points and assist in their needs for enforcement of existing trespass laws.

Dan Potts

I would like to join the effort because over the years I have already attended: your meetings, court hearings, and legislative hearings; have multiple higher degrees in aquatic ecology (including specializing in in-stream habitat restoration at USU); an avid, longtime participant with the Utah Anglers Coalition; a longtime fishing instructor (especially of children, but also fly fishers; longtime participant (fly tier & presenter) at the annual Fly Fishing Expo; but, mostly, because I have fished the recently opened section of the Weber for many decades

(literally grew up on that reach, and continue to fish it today), and therefore understand many of the longtime issues.

Rachel Dees

25 Years ago my husband and I decided that living in an urban community, spending 2 hours a day commuting to and from work and raising our then baby in an area where a truly wild outdoor experience was another 2 hour drive away wasn't what we wanted for our family. So we loaded a moving van and drove west. 1750 miles later we began our lives in Utah. Since then, our small family have come to love Utah and call her backcountry, home. Any typical weekend you may find my husband, my 24-year-old son or me rock climbing, backcountry skiing, ice-climbing, back-packing, or fly fishing. For me, protecting access to public lands and rivers is not a political issue; I am protecting my families way of life.

While a love for the outdoors is important, often it is not enough. Unfortunately, ownership and management of public lands has become a highly sought after financial asset for the private sector. Privatization efforts of public lands, waters and wildlife are backed by organizations with big money and deep resources. Politicians that have experienced staff members and the backing of their donors are working vigorously to drive agendas around mineral and gas exploration and real estate development. If those of us with passion for the outdoors do not marry that passion with real life business and organizational skills our efforts will surely be futile. If I am chosen to help lead the Utah Stream Access Coalition, I will use my professional experience in driving its mission. Currently I am a Sales Director for a global telecommunications company. In this role: I lead a diverse team toward common sales and revenue goals; I negotiate contracts with executive leadership within my client accounts; I drive strategy related to increasing my company's share of telecommunications spend within specific vertical markets; I am responsible for protecting and growing over 36 million dollars of annual revenue. In doing so, I have become an effective project and team leader. If allowed, I plan to leverage this experience on behalf of Utah Stream Access Coalition.