



# Newsletter

February 2015

Issue 46

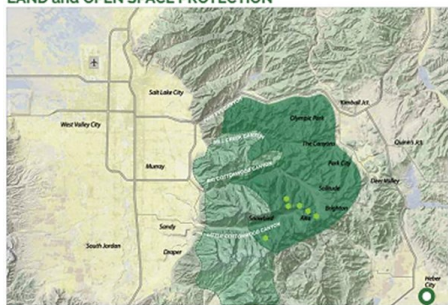
Alta Environmental Center  
PO Box 8007 • Alta, UT 84092  
environment@alta.com  
801.832.1700



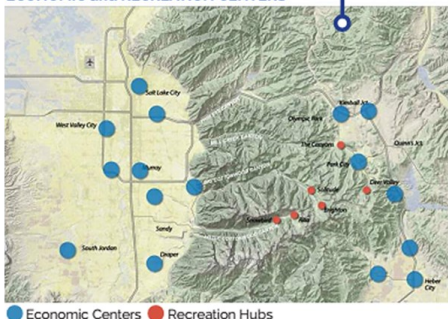
## Mountain Accord: Shaping Our Future - By Tim Rogers

The [Mountain Accord](#) is an unprecedented collaboration between over 20 Federal and State organizations, 200 stakeholders, experts, and the general public to help develop a vision and goals that define an ideal future for the Central Wasatch, one of Utah's most pristine and valuable natural resources. In early February, the Mountain Accord reached a major milestone with the announcement of its Proposed Blueprint. The Blueprint outlines key actions to be taken centered around the four major systems of the Central Wasatch: Environment, Recreation, Economy, and Transportation.

### LAND and OPEN SPACE PROTECTION



### ECONOMIC and RECREATION CENTERS



The blueprint is available online and open for public comment thru March 16<sup>th</sup>. At an open house on February 11<sup>th</sup>, Project Manager Laynee Jones announced their hope for over 10,000 comments before public input closes. Carl Fisher, Executive Director of Save Our Canyons, underscored the importance and opportunity of public opinion in this project by reminding the audience of the unique and truly once-in-a-lifetime opportunity we have to shape the future and sustainability of the Central Wasatch. In the face of a rapidly growing population and climate change, the sustainability of the Wasatch front and back are more than ever in need of thoughtful attention and planning. (continued p.2)

### RECREATION TRAIL NETWORK



### TRANSIT CONNECTIONS



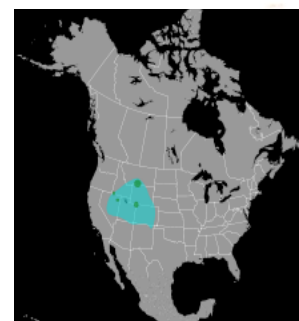
## The Black Rosy-Finch - By Liz Rocco

The Black Rosy-Finch, *Leucosticte atrata*, is a common sight at Alta in the winter. This bird is native to the Western United States and is closely related to two other species of rosy finches. Observers can identify the black rosy-finch by the black on the head, back and breast, with pink on the belly, rump, and wings. They have short black legs and a long forked tail. Their call is a buzz-sounding "chew".

The largest breeding population of this species is in the Wasatch and Uinta Mountains. The black rosy-finch's breeding habitat is within mountain areas above tree-line, among the alpine rocks and cliffs. Perhaps because of this, it is one of the least studied birds in North America. You can help change this by looking for this bird throughout Alta, and recording what you see in one of our *Bird Observation Books* that are located at various bird feeders around the mountain. For more information on where to find bird feeders and participate in Alta's monthly bird survey visit [alta.com/environment](http://alta.com/environment).

Rosy-finches in general are ground feeders. You can see this ground feeding behavior in action at the many bird feeders throughout Alta. They also often feed in flocks, sometimes mixing with grey-crowned and brown-capped rosy finches (which are also present in Alta). 97% of an adult's food is in the form of seeds, winter food is strictly seeds and vegetable matter. In areas of melting snow, they will uncover food items and new plant shoots growing. In summer they have been known to supplement their seed diets with some insects. When breeding both males and females develop throat pouches, known as gular pouches, to carry food to their chicks. This trait is seen in only one other North American genus, *Pinicola*. More commonly known as grosbeaks, which are also seen in Alta in the winter!

While shredding the slopes this winter, take a short break to enjoy the many birds that call Alta home.



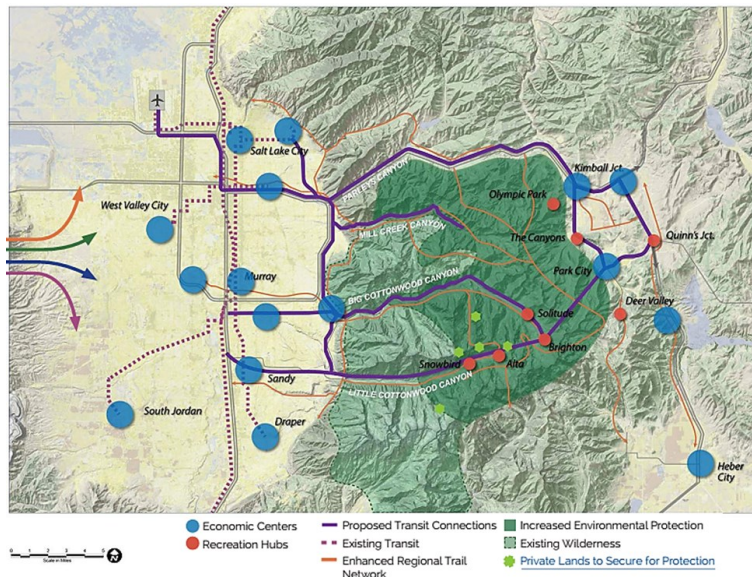


*I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately,  
to front only the essential facts of life,  
and see if I could not learn what it had to teach and not,  
when I came to die, discover that I had not lived.*

-Henry David Thoreau, Walden

The Blueprint is Mountain Accord's effort at a comprehensive proposal for changes and additions in infrastructure and policy that would help ensure long-term vitality of the Central Wasatch.

The blueprint is more than a map with lines and dots; it visualizes a compromise between all the representative stakeholders over hundreds of hours of work. There are proposals for exchanges and protection of land, the establishment of new and expanded trail network, an improvement of our economic centers, and significant additions to transportation alternatives. If you live or play in Little Cottonwood Canyon and are interested in the future of Alta and the Central Wasatch you are highly encouraged to take part in the public comment period. You can get more info, find the schedule of events, view the blueprint, and submit a comment anytime online at [mountainaccord.com](http://mountainaccord.com). Do not miss out on this historic opportunity to help shape our future, so take the time to read, learn, understand, and voice on what it may look like.



## February-March Sustainability Events

Looking for a different way to spend your Sunday afternoon, Wednesday evening, or any other day of the week? Look no further, Alta Environmental Center's Google Calendar will inform you of all kinds of different community events. The calendar includes everything from local non-profits, to all the Valley's eco-centers. Visit our Stewardship Calendar to see more: [altaence.com/resources\\_events.php](http://altaence.com/resources_events.php).

- **Mountain Accord Open House:** Visit [mountainaccord.com](http://mountainaccord.com) for more info on how to voice your input! The following lists the remaining open house events:

February 23—Alta, Our Lady of the Snows, 5 - 7pm

February 24—Park City, Eccles Center for the Performing Arts, 6 - 8:30pm

February 25—Salt Lake City, Skyline High School, 6 - 8:30pm

February 26—Wasatch County, Wasatch County Senior Center, 6 - 7:30pm

- **February 14-16 - Free National Parks Days:** Take advantage of this free weekend to visit our local [National Parks](#), from Great Basin to Zion, there are 16 Parks, Historic Trails, Heritage Areas or Monuments in Utah!

- **February 19 - Energy and Climate Film Series:** Presented by [Utah Clean Energy](#) and Westminster College, the film 'Trashed' investigates impacts of our global waste problem. 7:00pm at Gore Auditorium

- **February 21 - Snowshoe Naturalist Tour:** Join Cottonwood Canyons Foundation for a free Naturalist led nature tour to introduce you to the winter wonders of Alta! More info at [info@cottonwoodcanyons.org](mailto:info@cottonwoodcanyons.org).

- **February 23 - Penguin Feeding:** At 4:00pm the [Loveland Living Planet Aquarium](#), this place is worth a visit at any time!

- **March 5-6 - Intermountain Sustainability Summit:** Join Weber State University and Utah Recycling Alliance for their 6th annual conference in all that's sustainable. More info at [intermountainsustainabilitysummit.com](http://intermountainsustainabilitysummit.com)

- **March 9 - Winter Bird Survey:** Alta, Friends of Alta, and Tracy Aviary join together to begin a first ever monthly bird survey throughout Alta Ski Area. Sign up through [environment@alta.com](mailto:environment@alta.com)

- **March 13-14 - Alta SKE-COLOGY Workshop:** Sign up now to learn creative, effective ways to integrate outdoor recreation with education. This program takes place on skis in Alta! Visit [usee.org](http://usee.org) for more information.

