

Arizona Resource Advisory Council
Final Minutes
March 26, 2009

BLM National Training Center
9828 North 31st Avenue
Phoenix, Arizona

RAC Members in Attendance: Frances Werner, Linda Binder, Bill Brake, Tina Clark, Glen Collins, Matt Hogel, Jan Holder, Thomas Kelly, Linda Kennedy, Carolyn Loder, Richard Lunt, Norman Perry, Laura Pinnas, Maggie Sacher, Steve Saway, Josh Avey, Governor's RAC Representative

RAC Absent: None

BLM Staff in Attendance: Jim Kenna, Mike Taylor, Deborah Stevens, Joanie Losacco, Becky Heick, Tom Dabbs, Teri Raml, Scott Florence, Bill Gibson, Bill Coulloudon, Pamela Mathis, Pam McAlpin, Roger Oyler, Don Applegate, Eddie Arreola, Julie Decker, Lillian Robinson, Davina Wilkins

Presenters and Guests: Dan Shein, Arizona State Parks Department; Jeff Saari, U.S. Forest Service; Don Watson; Ron Bleger, Golder & Associates; Carla Cristelli, Department of Energy, Western Area Power Administration

AGENDA ITEM: Meeting Called to Order – Welcome and Introduction of RAC Members (Jim Kenna, Arizona State Director)

DISCUSSION: The meeting was called to order at 8:00 a.m., and the RAC members were introduced.

ACTION: N/A

AGENDA ITEM: RAC Chair and Vice Chair Elections (RAC Members), Deborah Stevens - Coordinator

DISCUSSION: The RAC offered nominations for the RAC Chair and Vice Chair and provided their comments about the nominees.

ACTION: Norman Perry moved to retain Frances Werner RAC Chair and Steve Saway Vice Chair. Linda Kennedy seconded the motion. Frances Werner was voted as RAC Chair and Steve Saway was voted RAC Vice Chair.

AGENDA ITEM: Review and Approval of September 18, 2008 Meeting Minutes (RAC Members)

DISCUSSION: Frances Werner provides some minor editorial changes.

ACTION: After review of the September 18, 2008 RAC meeting's minutes, Richard Lunt moved to accept them, and Linda Binder and Norman Perry seconded the motion. The motion passed to accept the minutes as written. Maggie Sacher abstained from the vote, because she had not yet been appointed to the RAC at the time of the September 18, 2008 meeting.

Steve Saway moved that the RAC approve the minutes of the September 18, 2008 Recreation Resource Advisory Committee (RRAC) Meeting, and Norman Perry seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM: BLM State Director's Introduction, Update on Legislation, Regulations and other Statewide Issues (Jim Kenna, BLM Arizona State Director and other BLM Staff)

DISCUSSION: Welcome and Introductory Remarks: Welcome everyone. I'm very happy to be here in Arizona; traveling around the state; meeting new people; and learning about the programs and issues. I'm pleased to have this opportunity and return to the state where I began my federal career. Before we get started, I want to mention a few items outside of what has been included in the RAC District and Field Manager Reports.

Secretary Salazar's Renewable Energy Development: Citing the critical need to reduce the nation's dependence on foreign oil, build a clean energy economy and create new jobs, Secretary Salazar issued a Secretarial Order making the production, development, and delivery of renewable energy top priorities for the Department. What does this mean for Arizona? It means Arizona is moving forward strategically to coordinate its efforts with the State of Arizona and other federal agencies to address the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and approval of solar and wind energy rights-of-way applications.

Norman Perry gave an overview of Arizona BLM land's potential use in generating solar power. He pointed out that if BLM in Arizona allowed the use of all BLM land that could be used for solar energy, several times more electricity would be generated than the state of Arizona uses as a whole. One major concern in the promotion of solar energy is the water that is needed to generate it. Another concern, he pointed out, is the number of foreign controlled companies that are profiting from alternative energy ventures on public lands; he used the number of foreign-backed corporations' leases in California's Mojave Desert as an example of this trend. Mr. Perry suggested that the BLM come back with a policy to help avoid approving applications that would send money out of the country. Mr. Perry stated that he plans to write a personal letter to Secretary Salazar to address these issues.

Jim Kenna responded that BLM Arizona had 37 active applications under consideration and that, among other factors, it was important to gauge the public's interest in the issue. Mr. Kenna said

he had met with the governor's natural resources advisor the day before to discuss similar issues. He asked for patience as the BLM worked through the important job of considering the public's voice on the issue.

Glen Collins responded that public lands offer value to many people, and during the "land rush" for applications to begin solar energy projects the BLM should consider those other values.

Carolyn Loder commented that the BLM had received hundreds of applications for uranium mining, but none have gone through; now there were many solar applications. She said it was important to look at the water, as well as sand and gravel, issues and cost effectiveness when considering solar energy usage of BLM lands. She estimated that many of the current applicants would abandon their requests due to the obstacles involved in the application process.

Interior's \$3 Billion in Economic Recovery: The economic recovery is front and center for all Americans. The Department of the Interior (DOI) and its agencies will be helping to do its share in the President's economic recovery plan. Secretary Salazar estimates the \$3 billion in funding allocated for the DOI could create as many as 100,000 jobs and stimulate business activities in communities across America. Many of the jobs to be created will focus on preserving America's timeless treasures – national parks, monuments and landscapes. To help in the Department's recovery plan, Salazar has established a Recovery Act Task Force that includes the leadership of Interior bureaus to determine which proposed projects should be funded. BLM-Arizona is looking to receive a share of the recovery funds for renewable energy, infrastructure, and restoration projects. The Department is scheduled to announce the projects to be funded in each Bureau and State in the next week or so.

Border Update: Issues along the U.S. – Mexico border, especially border security, continue to be a major concern for the county, state, federal and tribal governments along the border. BLM law enforcement agents and rangers have been busy monitoring the borderlands in light of escalating human and drug trafficking, especially in the Ironwood Forest and Sonoran Desert national monuments and the Yuma District along the lower Colorado River. In addition, we continue to work closely with the Department of Homeland Security and Border Patrol on the Secure Border Initiative (SBI). This includes the final segments of the border fence, and the work to be completed on four tower locations within the Lower Sonoran Field Office and the Ajo block. BLM is waiting for final locations, final environmental documents and biological opinions before issuing permits for all locations. Tower construction is slated to begin later in the year.

[Mr. Kenna gave a brief synopsis of a recent visit by Congressman Norman Dicks to tour the border. One RAC member said he had hoped there would be extra funds for policing on the border. Mr. Kenna replied BLM agents have received extensive training to deal with the situation. He said focusing on the public safety issues along the border will be a long-term and ongoing process.]

Fire Season Update: Arizona and much of the Southwest experienced a wet summer in 2008, an average to above average moisture this winter, which resulted in higher than normal fuel loadings in the upland grassland ecosystems and intermediate chaparral ecosystem. Because of these higher loadings, much of BLM Arizona can expect above average fire occurrence in 2009.

Climate outlooks for March thru June show decreased chances for moisture, resulting in an increase in fire activity. This is already evident through most of Southern Arizona, which is experiencing moderate Initial Attack and larger fires such as the Hog Fire in southeastern Arizona (1500+ acres, Coronado NF/Gila District BLM/AZ State) and the Aztec Fire in southwest Arizona (470 acres, Colorado River District BLM/AZ State).

BLM is coordinating with our various partners throughout Arizona in preparation for fire season, including weekly meetings to discuss the need for and/or effects of fire. We also are continuing our collaborative efforts with Arizona Forestry Department to allow us to more easily share resources for fuel treatments and improve cooperative administration of the Rural Fire Assistance and Ready Reserve programs.

2009 Budget and Priorities: Congress passed the 2009 Omnibus Appropriations Act on March 10, and the President signed the legislation on March 11, 2009. The Omnibus Act totals about \$410 billion and covers funding for fiscal year 2009 for the nine federal agencies, including BLM, that were not funded under the regular appropriations process last year. BLM-Arizona has not received its budget or annual work plan yet.

In the 2009 Budget Justifications, the President requested funding for several key emphasis areas. These areas include: Land Health, National Landscape Conservation Areas, Border Issues, Energy Security, Community Growth, and Non-Energy Commodity Use. Arizona BLM submitted requests in our out-year planning for each of these emphasis areas.

BLM Arizona 2009 priorities are focusing on the following areas: Borderlands, Range, Renewable Energy and Non-Energy Initiatives, Healthy Lands Initiative, National Landscape Conservation System, Travel Management Planning/Recreation, Mission Delivery Support, Fuels/Fire, Land Use Planning and Land Tenure Strategy.

RAC Call for Nominations: It's that time of year again! BLM has started its outreach to get nominations for the five positions which will be expiring in September 2009. This year we're looking to fill one position in Commodities, two positions in Non-Commodities, and two positions in Local Area Interests. The information for your consideration has been forwarded to you and posted on the BLM website. The deadline for nominations is Monday, April 13, 2008.

Two positions are open in category one (Commodity), which includes federal grazing permit, energy and mineral development, timber industry, transportation or rights-of-way, off-highway vehicle use, and commercial recreation interests. (Laura Pinnas, *Rights-of-Way/Transportation*, and Ty Kelly, *Federal Grazing Permittee*, terms are up.)

One position is open in category two (Non-Commodity), which includes nationally or regionally recognized environmental organizations, archaeological and historic interests, dispersed recreation, and wild horse and burro groups. (Tina Clark, *Historical/Archaeology*, term is up.)

Two positions are open in category three (Local Area Interest), which includes holders of State, county or local elected office, Native American Tribes, employees of a State agency responsible

for management of natural resources, academicians involved in natural sciences, and the public-at-large. (Linda Kennedy, *academicians*, and Norman Perry, *public-at-large*, terms are up.)

ACTION: None

AGENDA ITEM: RAC Questions on Field Manager Reports (RAC Members and BLM Field Managers)

DISCUSSION: Steve Saway asked if the APS right-of-way on the north side of State Highway 74 was to go through land of recreational value, and Phoenix District Manager Teri Raml answered that it was. Ms. Werner volunteered that the right-of-way through BLM land was not what APS wanted, but that the Arizona Corporation Commission ruled that it should be on BLM land, rather than through the residential subdivision near-by. She also said that there was a general unawareness by cities and counties that they must ask the BLM for the right-of-way and must have them get involved in the decision making process. According to Ms. Raml, the BLM was working through the protest process while the siting commission was going through theirs. Jim Kenna said that one positive outcome from the situation was that the Arizona Corporation Commission asked for a meeting with him to discuss how the state and BLM can better cooperate in future.

ACTION: None

AGENDA ITEM: Update on Solar Rights-of-Way Applications, Processing and Collaboration (Julie Decker, Group Leader for Lands, Recreation and Planning)

DISCUSSION: Julie Decker introduced Eddie Arreola, the new lead for the statewide solar energy program. Ms. Decker said there are currently 37 solar energy development rights-of-way applications in Arizona. The Solar Right-of-Way teams mentioned at a previous RAC meeting have started to form in the pilot offices. Processing of all renewable energy rights-of-way will be done by the renewable energy team, but there will be points of contact in each field office to assist applicants. A Solar Energy Programmatic EIS may be available in August. The projects will have individual EISs. Mike Taylor gave a brief outline of the application process, and the desire of the agency to make that process uniform and consistent for each applicant. Ms. Decker stressed that although the process was using the best management practices for energy development, the process would not take the place of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis. The AZ BLM is working closely with state agencies and the tribes to determine where renewable energy sites fit best in Arizona. Members expressed concerns about additional transmission lines, the amount of land that will be unavailable for other public uses, such as grazing, and the amount of water needed. Carolyn spoke of the differences in leasing public land and buying private land and the advantages of purchasing private lands. The office

will hold an industry meeting for applicants to discuss the process; followed by individual meetings to give applicants the status of their applications. The AZ BLM also intends to do outreach to the public to provide information about NEPA work. Jim Kenna added that he was most interested in developing an effective coordination between the BLM and the state and other agencies, while making certain that the process works in a way that is in the best interest of applicants and stakeholders. When asked about cost recovery, Mr. Arreola stated that a fee hasn't been established yet. Norman Perry said the RAC normally gets an update directly before each meeting. He requested that the RAC be given updates on the renewable energy program every six weeks. Mr. Arreola suggested going to the web site for more information. Carolyn spoke to the difficulties and problems navigating BLM's web site – one hits a firewall.

ACTION: BLM will give the RAC members a renewable energy update every six weeks.

AGENDA ITEM: Presentation on Wild Horse and Burro Program in Arizona (Roger Oyler, Wild Horse and Burro Coordinator)

DISCUSSION: Roger Oyler of the Wild Horse and Burro (WH&B) program gave a presentation about the background of the program and original act. He said there is currently a proposal in the House (H.B. 1018) to amend the Wild Horse and Burro Act of 1971. He said the BLM is mandated to manage the animals. Arizona has seven Herd Management Areas, but only two of those still have horses, the others have burros. BLM manages the wild horses and burros through partnerships with the Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service and Arizona Game and Fish Department. Mr. Oyler stated the program is heavy on the operational budget. It costs \$475 per year to keep an animal and there are about 30,000 in custody at present. He said there have been 1112 adoptions in FY 2009, down by 700 animals from the number adopted in FY 2008. Two-thirds of the operational budget goes to feeding the animals. It is not official yet, but gathers may begin again to collect nuisance animals this year. Next year, BLM could receive some additional funding to gather up to 300 animals. Bill Brake suggested the BLM look into birth control for mares as a cost-effective way of controlling populations. Linda Binder also expressed support for the birth control process. Mr. Oyler responded that the BLM and the Humane Society see birth control as an option. Mike Taylor was asked about an offer by an outside group made last year to donate funds for the horses. Mr. Taylor responded that funds would go to the national program, and BLM has not received further word about the group's donation proposal. The proposed bill would not allow the use of choppers to gather animals, if gathered they could not be held for more than six months and sanctuaries would be created expanding the lands to be used for the horses. Game and Fish agencies are concerned about how this would affect native wildlife. The national office has proposed that the National Program's Operation Center in Reno have the responsibility for all gathers, adoptions, population inventory and monitoring herd management. Because of this, budget implications will be piecemeal.

The new holding facility in Kingman will now be used as a temporary staging area. The current area, a state land lease will be cleaned up and vacated.

Linda Binder reported that Ms. Pickens has asked the BLM for \$500 a year per horse if she gets land in Nevada to keep some horses.

Thomas Kelly suggested the Arizona RAC write a letter to the national program expressing its support of contraception use of wild horses and burros to control population growth.

ACTION ITEM: Thomas Kelly made the motion to write a RAC recommendation to the BLM supporting a pilot program to use contraception on wild horses and burros to control populations; Bill Brake seconded the motion. The motion passed.

AGENDA: Presentation on the Healthy Lands Initiative Projects in Arizona (Pam McAlpin, Arizona Healthy Landscapes Coordinator)

DISCUSSION: In her presentation, Pam McAlpin said the BLM is developing partnerships around the state to deal with issues such as invasive species, fire, habitat and water issues that cross borders and boundaries between state, federal and local agencies. Ms. McAlpin highlighted several projects around the state that were examples of successful partnerships. She emphasized the BLM is pursuing more partnerships to expand the work. Mr. Taylor gave Las Cienegas as an example of an area where the existing partnership has been beneficial and will continue to be very important in the future. Mr. Brake mentioned that Equip money was no longer available to use in federal lands. (See Briefing Paper)

ACTION ITEM: None

AGENDA: Report from the Standards & Guidelines Working Group (Bill Coulloudon, BLM Range Conservationist)

DISCUSSION: Bill Coulloudon gave the report on the Standards & Guidelines Working Group meeting, which was attended by 11 RAC members. Mr. Coulloudon reported there have been 515 permit renewals in the past ten years, and another 77 are scheduled to be completed this fiscal year. Four of those have been appealed. The data that is kept each year is placed in a national inventory and monitoring report. The Arizona monitoring handbook has been in the development process for three years, and has been sent to the publisher and is waiting for additional pictures. One RAC member suggested that there should be a presentation from the National Inventory and Operating Center at the next Standards and Guidelines Working Group Meeting.

Glen Collins mentioned the report on “A History of the Arizona BLM Resource Advisory Council’s Role in Developing and Implementing Standards for Grazing Administration” that has been prepared by the standards and guidelines working group and approved by the RAC on March 6, 2008. He asked that new RAC members be sent copies of that report.

Glen Collins announced that the Public Lands Foundation had presented its 2008 Landscape Conservation Award to RAC member Jan Holder. The award was presented at a December 10, 2008 meeting of the Gila Watershed Partnership, of which Jan is the Executive Director. The

award is given annually by the Public Lands Foundation to recognize the help that private citizens and citizen groups give to the BLM in managing public lands. The BLM Safford Office had nominated Jan for her leadership of the work of the Gila Watershed Partnership has done to improve and restore the Gila River Watershed in Eastern Arizona. The nomination was supported by leaders of the agencies and organizations who have worked with Jan in the Gila Watershed partnership.

ACTION ITEM: Pursue having a representative from the National Inventory and Operating Center give a presentation at the next Standards and Guidelines working group, as well as a presentation about the pilot study, “How Is Land Health Measured”, to the full RAC. Send copies of the report on the RAC’s role in S&G implementation to those RAC members who do not have it.

AGENDA: Public Comment Period

DISCUSSION: Dan Shein of the Arizona State Parks Department offered to have one of his employees give a demonstration of the “Blue Model” and what it could do for future land use planning at a future RAC Meeting.

ACTION ITEM: Add the agenda item to the list for RAC consideration.

AGENDA: Report from Recreation Working Group (Norman Perry, Chair)

DISCUSSION: Bill Gibson reported on recreation and discussed the implementation of the OHV guidelines in the field. Don Applegate distributed a draft Recreation and Tourism Strategy for Arizona. Don and Norman Perry asked RAC members to comment on the strategy and to send their comments to both Don and Norman in advance of the next RAC meeting. Norman distributed copies of Arizona’s 2008 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) to the RAC members. The SCORP report is prepared by the Arizona State Parks board and serves as the state’s outdoor recreation policy plan. Frances Werner said the document originated in the 1960s, and was intended to be updated every five years with a public process.

ACTION ITEM: RAC comments on the BLM’s draft Recreation and Tourism Strategy for Arizona are to be given to Don Applegate and Norman Perry before next RAC meeting.

RECESSED FOR LUNCH. RECONVENED 1:15 P.M.

AGENDA: Report from the Land Use Planning and Tenure Working Group (Glen Collins, Chair)

DISCUSSION: Glen Collins distributed copies of Secretarial Order No. 3082 of December 16, 2008, which designated the BLM public lands the “National System of Public Lands”. There was discussion of the significance of the action, which put the BLM administered lands into a national system, similar to that of the National Forest system, the National Park system, and the National Wildlife system. It gives formal recognition to the public values of the BLM lands, and will help generate public support for retaining the BLM “national public lands” in federal ownership.

The BLM is working on ways to institutionalize the National System of Public Lands into the agency’s programs. The RAC has advocated for giving distinctive names to the major blocks of BLM public land to make it easier for the public to find, use, and enjoy their public lands, and to help ensure the permanence of this national outdoor recreation asset. The RAC believes that naming the blocks of BLM lands is a logical next step in having a national system of public lands, and the RAC would like to help BLM with the naming process.

There was discussion of the adopted protocol for RAC involvement in the preparation of BLM’s resource management plans – the field managers brief the RAC on RMP’s before the preferred alternative is finalized. There was some feeling within the RAC that the RAC should be briefed on travel management plans as well. Steve Saway will draft a proposed amendment to the protocol providing for RAC review of travel management plans for further discussion at the next RAC meeting.

There was a discussion of the draft middle Gila Canyons Travel Management Plan, which the Tucson Field Office has released for public comment, and discussion of the RAC’s role in initiating the analysis of what is now the Middle Gila Canyons area, and the history of development of this travel management plan.

Julie Decker and district managers Teri Raml, Scott Florence, Tom Dabbs and Becky Heick used the March 2008 “Arizona Land Use Planning Update” report to brief the RAC on the status of planning projects in the four districts.

Tom Dabbs briefed the RAC on the litigations and discussion the BLM’s Tucson field office is having with Pinal County to defend the BLM’s conservation easement on the San Pedro riverbed in the Dudleyville area against OHV travel on a road across the riverbed that is facilitated by the county.

There was discussion of the growing number of solar energy project proposals and applications pending before the BLM, and one RAC member suggested that the RAC should have a solar and wind energy working group. Other RAC members expressed concerns over the number of working groups and there was some support for keeping discussions of the subject of these

renewable energy project land uses in the land use planning and tenure working group. State director Jim Kenna said he wants RAC input on the solar and wind energy program in Arizona. Glen Collins suggested that the renewable energy projects would be a subject of the next land use planning and tenure working group meeting and that the working group would address the issue of having a separate RAC renewable energy working group.

ACTION ITEM: Steve Saway will draft a protocol for RAC review of travel management plans. Make Renewable energy a topic for the next Land Use meeting.

AGENDA: Overview of the Arizona BLM Recreation Fees Program (Don Applegate, BLM State Outdoor Recreation Coordinator)

DISCUSSION: Don Applegate gave a brief PowerPoint presentation. The RAC discussed fee collection and disbursement. There are currently 23 fee projects. Those projects remain primarily office-specific, but there are some exceptions. For the most part, those projects remain based on original fee demonstration projects, but a major change is that amenity fees are distinguished from Special Recreation Permit fees; each project is in a separate account for audit tracking and reporting purposes. This gave auditors a chance to see if the money was being used as it was supposed to have been. Money collected by the BLM is kept in the program it was collected for – i.e. permit money is kept in the permit program; amenity fees benefit amenity sites, etc. A BLM Intern is helping Don take old business plans and bring them up to date with new developments. The point is, he said, that we do need to abide by the business plan, according to law.

Brief discussion and demonstration of the BLM Arizona webpage and the difficulty members, and the public, have had accessing information.

ACTION ITEM: BLM staff will check and ensure that RAC and RRAC webpages are accessible from public computers, not just from within the BLM system.

AGENDA: Report from Recreation Enhancement Act Working Group (Steve Saway, Chair)

DISCUSSION: (Also see handout) Steve gave a brief background on the RAC's involvement in the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (REA). An REA protocol was developed to deal with the recreation fee proposals and to screen proposals to make sure they are ready for the full RAC. The RAC appointed members to serve on the REA Work Group. They are Frances Werner, Glen Collins, Norman Perry, and Steve Saway (other RAC members are welcome to join). As part of the REA protocol, a schedule of fee proposals for RAC review is developed each year. Initially, there were quarterly fee proposal reviews, now semiannual. 2007/2008 were big years. The protocol gave guidelines on the content of agency fee proposals for RAC review.

Jeff Saari, of the Forest Service, said the Arizona RAC looks at Forest Service fee proposals in Arizona. There are no fee proposals to bring forward right now, but there are expected to be more in 2010. High Impact Recreation Areas (HIRAs) have been controversial for the Forest Service. At the June 25 meeting, he said they will do an overview of the Forest Service Arizona Fee Program for the RAC. Bill Brake suggested that any proposals be sent before the RAC meetings to give members the opportunity to review them before the meeting.

Steve Saway presented an email Deborah Stevens received from the President of the Western Slope No Fee Coalition. Among the comments in the letter, which were listed on a handout distributed at the meeting:

- “The Recreation RAC meetings did not follow open meeting requirements, because telephone meetings were closed to the public.” Mr. Saway said they meet in the capacity of a workgroup, not a full RAC, and as is the case with other workgroups, the RAC’s understanding is that these workgroup meetings do not require public notice, etc. The workgroups serve in a fact-finding role and no decisions are made.
- “Inadequate notification of meetings; no notice in local newspaper of record.” The BLM posts the information on its website, though some expressed problems with accessing.. Also, the agency fee proponent generally posts a notice on its website of the upcoming RAC meeting. The BLM’s press release of the RAC meeting that is sent to a local newspaper of record, may or may not be published. Possibly, a legal notice could be used but that is more costly.
- “Meeting agendas and minutes have not been posted to the website for all meetings held.” Minutes are always posted, but sometimes months later. Also, there are some minutes and agendas posted but the web links are not working. This needs to be fixed.
- “Inadequate public outreach.” Jim Kenna said this matter would be looked into. The agency fee proposals, Mr. Saway stated, have been posted to the web in advance of the RAC meeting. He said the Arizona RAC would continue to get things out and if necessary have meetings in local communities.
- “Minutes of meetings are not timely, are ambiguous, and/or are incomplete.” Bill Brake responded to this statement, “I think our minutes are accurate. That is one person’s opinion, and I am offended by that statement.” Also, minutes are not approved until the next quarterly meeting, which accounts for the delayed release. Possibly, a press release could be posted on the RRAC web site to announce results of the RRAC meeting
- “Legal requirement for ‘general public support’ is ignored, is not documented, or is assumed when no comments are received.” One RAC member stated that the RAC’s role is to try to gauge how many of public may not be vocal, but approve of the fees, and how many don’t. Another member said they believed the group had been sensitive to this issue.

Deborah Stevens said the RRAC minutes and the minutes would be put in the Spotlight section on the front page of the web site. It was mentioned that electronic comment might be allowed to

reach more of the public. There was a debate among RAC members about whether to answer the letter directly or not.

MOTION: Norman Perry moved to Table the Discussion, with Linda Kennedy seconding the motion. All members except Maggie Sacher and Bill Brake voted in favor. The motion was passed and a break was taken.

ACTION ITEM: Jeff Saari, of the Forest Service, will do an overview of the Forest Service Arizona Fee Program, including High Impact recreation Areas (HIRAs) for the RAC meeting in June. Discuss having fee proposals sent to RAC members ahead of time to view before the meeting. The RRAC and the minutes would be put in the Spotlight on the front page of the web.

BREAK

Maggie Sacher asked to un-table the discussion on the non-response to the Western Slope letter, because, she said, it was written to all RACs and deserved a response. She said it was an opportunity for the RAC to voice what it is doing right, and if it is found that something is being done improperly, to change it. Glen Collins made the motion to un-table the discussion. Bill Brake said that he believed that it was the BLM and Forest service's responsibility to respond to the letter, not the RAC's responsibility. Jim Kenna said there were things that the agency should, and could, do in response: check on firewall issues affecting computer access to information. Glen Collins said fellow RAC member Maggie Sacher did a good thing by un-tabling the discussion.

MOTION: Glen Collins made a motion that the RAC Chair write a letter to the BLM State Director responding to the points in the Western Slope No-Fee Coalition's letter. Maggie Sacher seconded the motion. The motion was passed.

ACTION: The Vice-Chair, as Chair of the RRAC, will draft and circulate to the other RAC members a letter to the BLM State Director responding to points in the Western Slope No-Fee Coalition's letter.

AGENDA: RAC Annual Work Plan Review and Discussion (RAC members and BLM staff)

DISCUSSION: A brief discussion was conducted. Frances Werner suggested that the Annual Work Plan review and discussion be moved earlier in the agenda, because it is often skipped when the meeting is running over.

ACTION ITEM: Move Annual Work Plan review and discussion to earlier in the agenda.

AGENDA: Discussion on Future Meetings/Locations (RAC members and BLM staff)

DISCUSSION: Steve Saway suggested that a future meeting be at one of the field offices where a field trip could be combined with the meeting. A possibility is the Arizona Strip District to help the RAC better understand the RMP challenges there. The Middle Gila Canyons Area in Pinal County was also mentioned as a possibility. It would give the RAC an opportunity to see a high recreation use area, and the travel management plan actions, which the BLM Tucson Field Office is proposing. Deborah Stevens said that the dates and location of the next meeting needed to be done when the RAC had a quorum and Frances Werner concurred, saying it was in the RAC's charter. Glen Collins suggested a field trip to Martinez Canyon to let members see what an OHV area looks like after use. One RAC member mentioned that Standards and Guidelines training is usually done when meetings are held in the field.

Frances Werner moved to adjourn, with Linda Binder seconding the motion. The motion passed, and the RAC meeting adjourned at 4:15pm.

ACTION ITEM: Look into having one RAC meeting in the field; have Standards & Guidelines training at that meeting.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Write a recommendation to the BLM in support of a pilot program to use contraception to reduce the number of wild horses and burros (Ty Kelly);
- BLM give the RAC members a renewable energy update every six weeks;
- Pursue having a representative from the National Inventory and Operating Center give a presentation at the next Standards and Guidelines working group (Sherm Karl);
- Send copy of RAC's report on "The History of the Arizona Resource Advisory Council's Role in Developing and Implementing Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Grazing Administration" to those RAC members who do not already have it (Deborah Stevens);
- Comments on the BLM's draft Recreation and Tourism Strategy for Arizona be given to Don Applegate and Norman Perry before next RAC meeting;
- Steve Saway will draft a protocol to give the RAC an opportunity to review BLM travel management plans before they are finalized (Steve Saway);
- Jeff Saari, of the Forest Service, will do an overview of the Forest Service Arizona Fee Program including HIRAs for the RAC meeting in June;
- Discuss having fee proposals sent to RAC members ahead of time to view before the meeting (BLM field offices/Deborah Stevens);
- Make Renewable energy a topic for the next Land Use meeting;
- Put the RRAC and the RAC minutes in the Spotlight on the front page of the web (Deborah Stevens);

- Chair to write a letter to the BLM State Director responding to points in the Western Slope No-Fee Coalition's letter (Steve Saway & Frances Werner);
- Consider moving the Annual Work Plan review and discussion to earlier in the agenda, because it is often skipped when the meeting is running over;
- Look into having one RAC meeting in the field; have Standards & Guidelines training at that meeting.