

RESOURCE ADVISORY COUNCIL (RAC)

FINAL

February 3, 2011

BLM National Training Center
9828 N 31st Avenue
Phoenix, Arizona 85051

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Frances Werner, Glen Collins, Carolyn Loder, Elizabeth Buchroeder-Webb, Maggie Sacher, Eric Gorsegner, Larry Howery, Steve Saway, Carl Taylor, Laura Sagerman, Richard Lunt, Norman Perry, Bill Brake and Josh Avey (Governor's Rep.)

ABSENT: Lawrence Sneed and Thomas Kelly

BLM STAFF IN ATTENDANCE: Jim Kenna, Julie Decker, Chris Horyza, Kathy Pedrick, Angie Bulletts, Scott Florence, Joanie Losacco, Maria Troche, Pamela Mathis, Ramone McCoy, Tom Dabbs, Don Applegate, Rem Hawes, Bill Gibson, Dorothea Boothe and Susan Williams

PRESENTERS & GUESTS: Kristine Uhlman, Bob Sejkora, AZ State Parks Water Program Manager, David Batts, BLM RDEP Contractor

AGENDA ITEM: Meeting Called to Order approx. 8:10 a.m. (Frances Werner, RAC Chair)

AGENDA ITEM: BLM State Director's Introduction, update on legislation, regulations and other statewide issues (Jim Kenna, BLM Arizona State Director)

- **Welcomed new RAC Members**

Eric Gorsegner representing environmental interests – Eric has also worked on energy projects and wilderness issues.

Elizabeth Buchroeder-Webb representing archaeology and historical interests.

Larry Sneed representing the Public-at-Large (absent – on travel out of the country)

Carolyn Loder returning as a representative of energy & minerals interests.

Bill Brake returning as a grazing representative.

- **Welcome Remarks:** Introduction of all RAC members in attendance.

- **Introduction of New Managers/Staff**

Julie Decker was selected as the new Deputy State Director of Resources and replaces Mike Taylor who recently retired. Kenna welcomed back Tom Dabbs, Gila District Manager who returned to work in December. He also acknowledged Becky Heick, formerly the Colorado River District Manager, who now serves as the new Group Manager for Lands & Minerals.

Kenna acknowledged the recent shootings in Tucson. He said we're all working our way through it. The BLM has worked closely with Congresswoman Giffords and her staff, especially Gabe Zimmerman, who attended many BLM events. We are hopeful to see the Congresswoman back healthy again soon.

Kenna also acknowledged the shooting of Agent Terry of the Border Patrol, who was part of the Border Patrol (BP) unit that works closely with BLM law enforcement. Kenna noted that the BLM has put considerable focus on the Sonoran Desert National Monument (SDNM). The cartels were putting their own roads and trails in the Tabletop Wilderness area. The BLM has been effective in stopping the cartel from making their trails. The BLM has a coordinated border strategy with Federal, state and local law enforcement on what's going on in the area. The BLM's priorities are security, resource protection and coordination with other agencies. The BLM is also working to clear out the trash and lay-up areas within the SDNM. BLM has added an additional repeater in the Vekol Valley to improve radio coverage for all cooperating law enforcement agencies. Deployments are also being coordinated with other agencies.

DISCUSSION: Frances Werner recalled the recent helicopter that crashed on the Ironwood Forest National Monument (IFNM). She pointed out when the press was releasing information about the crash, that they were unaware of who managed the land.

Carolyn Loder gave special recognition of the difficulties that the BLM law enforcement staff encounters on their patrols.

Kenna emphasized how important it is to have good radio communications out in the field (by adding additional repeaters and maintaining the equipment).

Werner thanked Joanie Losacco in the BLM communications department for the BLM outreach on border issues resulting in several articles in the Tucson newspaper keeping people informed of what's happening on the IFNM.

Agency Announcements: Secretary Salazar announced a new policy in December to Protect America's "Wild Lands," Secretarial Order 3310. Secretarial Order 3310 restores balance to the management of public lands by affirming that the protection of the wilderness characteristics of public lands is a high priority for the BLM, and is an integral component of its multiple-use mission. The Order affirms the BLM's obligation to maintain wilderness resource inventories on a regular and continuing basis for the public lands under its jurisdiction. It further directs the BLM to protect wilderness characteristics through land use planning and project-level decisions unless the BLM determines, in accordance with the Order, that impairment of wilderness characteristics is appropriate and consistent with other applicable requirements of law and other resource management plan considerations. BLM is currently without comprehensive national guidance on how to inventory and manage lands with wilderness characteristics as a result of the Norton-Leavitt Settlement, making new internal guidance necessary.

Secretary Salazar announced three new agencies in strengthening oversight of offshore drilling and carrying out the functions once performed by the Minerals Management Service (MMS).

MMS was renamed Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation and Enforcement (BOEMRE); the revenue collection arm is the now the **Office of Natural Resources Revenue**; the **Bureau of Ocean Energy Management** (BOEM) will be responsible for managing development of the nation's offshore resources in an environmentally and economically responsible way; and the **Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement** (BSEE) will enforce safety and environmental regulations.

Northern Arizona Withdrawal: Focused on completing the draft mineral withdrawal EIS; sent to printer on January 21 and tentatively scheduled for release to the public on February 18. However, the details on the timing of the document's release are still being worked out. This process is an objective basis for the Secretary to make a decision on the withdrawal. The Interagency disciplinary team is working diligently with the contractor to provide a science-based foundation for the Secretary and maintain the integrity of the process. Kenna thanked the RAC for helping with the framing of the issues and alternatives of this DEIS.

NLCS: Had a very successful year. The 10-year Anniversary Celebrations were all well attended. There have been new start-up Friends' Groups, i.e. Friends of the Cliffs, and BLM is starting to receive more partnership interest. The communities are working well with the BLM. Priorities are going to stay the same. The BLM has had great success in youth involvement, and also formed great partnerships with the Audubon to conduct bird monitoring in the Agua Fria National Monument. The Phoenix school system is also involving their youth in BLM projects.

Kenna met with managers in all of the units to discuss planning forward and keeping things moving at a recent statewide NLCS workshop held in Phoenix.

American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA): A lot of work has been done in the 119 separate contracts, including 49 projects. 99.6% of the funds were allocated. Every dollar has been well spent. Success Story: The BLM-AZ Phoenix District and Black Canyon Trail Coalition are planning an April 2011, ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate completion of the Black Canyon National Recreation Trail after 42 years. Created by Interior Secretary Steward Udall on Jan. 3, 1969, the 89-mile, non-motorized trail runs through spectacular high desert scenery just north of Phoenix. While trail users, including mountain bikers, equestrians and hikers, spent countless volunteer days working on the trail, ARRA funding gave the biggest boost toward the trail's completion. BLM spent \$422,000 of ARRA funding to hire two youth conservation crews, employing 55 young adults, to work and complete the last trail segments. Not only was it an economic boost for the youth and community, but it was also an opportunity for the youth to learn about resource management and environmental stewardship. It was a win-win for everyone involved. Kenna invited the RAC to join BLM staff and partners on April 9, at the Black Canyon National Recreation Trail ribbon-cutting ceremony.

Laura Sagerman commented on the Bighorn Station project, and suggested that pictures and examples should be rolled out to show the general public how the money was spent.

Kenna stated that the BLM is looking at how to inform the public on how their money was allocated. Kenna received a complimentary letter from the Inspector General on a job well done with ARRA funding, and this has never happened during his BLM career.

Restoration Design Energy Project (RDEP) Programmatic EIS: We have made significant progress and talked to many people at the local, county, state and Federal level to build coalition and support for a statewide approach to renewable energy development in Arizona. The Restoration Design Energy Project is the unifying tool to building this statewide picture. RDEP supports the Secretary's goals to build America's new energy future and to protect and restore treasured landscapes. The EIS is on the street and has programmatic content on how the BLM will do authorizations. The big picture is taking BLM-managed lands and dividing it into tiers. There are areas with low levels of conflict called study areas and more intensive inventories will be done. Areas in between are still open and available to application and is a large area for most states. The Arizona allocations will be focused on disturbed lands where it makes sense to site energy generation projects.

The National Programmatic Solar Environmental Impact Statement (EIS): Public meetings scheduled to gather comments on a comprehensive environmental analysis that has identified proposed 'solar energy zones' on public lands in the west most suitable for environmentally sound, utility-scale solar energy production; Washington DC, CA, NV, AZ, NM, CO, UT

- Tuesday March 1, 2011, at 7:00 pm: Sheraton Crescent Hotel, 2620 W. Dunlap Avenue, Phoenix, AZ 85021
- Wednesday, March 2, 2011, at 7:00 pm: Marriott University Park Hotel, 880 E. Second Street, Tucson, AZ.(change of location)

Information on the meetings and locations are in your notebooks

Eric Gorsegrner: Asked if the BLM could envision solar study areas that cross jurisdictions. Kenna said this can be done.

Steve Saway: In the Solar Programmatic EIS, is there going to be a trumping problem? Kenna said no. We (BLM) are working on this at the national level. This is the most important issue we are working on today, and the BLM needs the input of the RAC. We need to have a clear discussion on the BLM's role once we are further down the road with participation of the State (Corporation) Commission. Where is the water going to come from, etc? This will help create a platform for the role of the BLM.

Josh Avey, Arizona Game and Fish Department commended the BLM for all their work on this project. The message to the public is important. How much of our State do we want to see developed and where?

Glen Collins is concerned about Arizona lands supplying Arizona's needs. The EIS focuses on the impacts on what the facilities would cost that it misses the point of the product benefits and the Federal lands providing for the product that we take for granted that can be transmitted immediately nationwide. We spend millions of dollars evaluating impacts that we forget to look at the value of the product. The point needs to be made that electricity is a National objective of providing this commodity and that Federal lands have the opportunity to provide for the Nation. Leasing lands for electric generation is very important and keeping the options open for future generations by balancing the impact with the desire for the commodity.

Jim Kenna stated that he hopes in this stage of the process we all focus on do we have the right set of alternatives and do we have the major issues?

Bill Brake: We need to keep an open mind. Somewhat lacking is a Luke AFB situation 50 years from now, that we don't expand far enough out and encroach on the area, thus no more expanding of the renewable energy area.

Maggie Sacher: We need to take time to plan on what we see restoration as and that the end result in how the land is reclaimed needs to be given a lot of consideration in the planning process.

ACTION: Kathy Pedrick suggested showing the PowerPoint presentation (on RDEP) to the RAC at the next meeting.

AGENDA ITEM: RAC Questions on BLM District Reports (RAC Members)

DISCUSSION:

Carl Taylor: On the Arizona Strip District, discussion of 11.2 miles of tortoise fencing?

Response from Scott Florence: ARRA project along old Highway 91. In Mohave Desert tortoise habitat, tortoise fencing is low fencing along highways and roads to protect the tortoise from going on the roads.

An Environmental Assessment appealed by Western Watersheds Project (WWP): Who are they and what are they upset about? Bill Brake stated that WWP consider themselves as guardians of the land and are very active throughout the United States in trying to stop livestock use of the public lands.

Carl Taylor: Topock Chromium 6 Groundwater Remediation in the Colorado River District – How do you remediate this problem? Response from Ramone McCoy, acting Colorado River District Manager: Current technology is a series of wells pumping circulating water in with a

reducing agent and converts chromium 6 to chromium 3, and pumping water out. The goal is to protect the Colorado River water supply.

Frances Werner acknowledged the great job that the Phoenix District Office did with the National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS) Celebration for having projects involving youth, along with the Wells Fargo stagecoach being onsite and involving 23 partners.

Bill Brake: Making sure the Cattle Growers react correctly when there are issues on the ranches (found 13 bundles of marijuana the other day) ...that we report this to the Border Patrol. Should this also be reported to the BLM by the ranchers? Response from Kenna: No, make reports to the Border Patrol and the BLM will be informed through the Intelligence Reports.

Elizabeth Buchroeder-Webb: What do we do about trash left on smaller parcels of public lands near areas where we live? Response from Kathy Pedrick: There is now a State website where you can report trash on public lands (Pedrick will send out the link). You can also report it to the Border Patrol.

Eric Gorseigner: Regarding the TS5 TS9 powerline on the Hassayampa, does the timeline jive with the in-service date? How long does the Notice of Intent process take? Is this generally co-located with the freeway? Response from Angie Bullets: This has been a long process and there will be an aggressive timeline (about 18 months). The benefit is decisions are being made at the national level.

ACTION: Send out link for State website to report trash dumping on public lands. (Pedrick)

AGENDA ITEM: Where Does Your Water Really Come From: (Kristine Uhlman, University of Arizona Cooperative Extension, Water Resources Research Center)

Kristine gave a PowerPoint presentation and handed out a University of Arizona booklet, Arizona Well Owner's Guide to Water Supply.

DISCUSSION: This was an outstanding presentation! What is the cost to have aquifer water sampled? Answer: The analysis for Carbon 14 is about \$275-\$300.

Is the Colorado Plateau a stable block? Answer: Yes.

How long does it take water to migrate through solid rock? Answer: Water flows through the fractures and cracks and it depends on the fracture frequency. Note the site-specific geology on the basin map.

Have you identified scientifically how much water is available in a specific aquifer based on population? Answer: You know the geology from drilling wells. Generally, the deeper you drill the poorer the quality of water because of its age.

In the valley, can we achieve a level of sustainability? Answer: We are just beginning to measure what's in the water. How much water is going in and how much is being removed. Recharge is a good thing. Tucson is monitoring and recharging the Central Project Water and they are monitoring both input and output.

Are there any research grants that someone is studying the consumption? Answer: This is being done by the Bureau of Reclamation.

The next step is to do a refresh before water strategies are discussed. Thanks to Kristine and the Gila Partnership for this outstanding presentation.

ACTION: Send thank you letter to Ms. Uhlman on behalf of the RAC. (Boothe)

Public Comment Period: The Public Comment Period was opened at 11:30 a.m. and closed due to no comments.

AGENDA ITEM: Update on the Northern Arizona Mineral Withdrawal Draft EIS
(Chris Horyza, BLM Project Leader, and Scott Florence)

This project started in July 2009. The proposal is to withdraw from mineral entry about one million acres of BLM and Forest Service lands adjacent to the Grand Canyon National Park. The BLM was designated as the lead agency to work with State, local, and Tribal governments to lead an objective review of the impacts of the proposed withdrawal. The report will be sent to the Secretary of the Interior who will make the decision on the proposed withdrawal. The BLM has had two scoping meetings (Fredonia & Flagstaff, Arizona), and has received 83,000 comments from 90 different countries.

BLM thanks the RAC for all their work on this project that helped frame the analysis and alternatives that are in the EIS.

The last briefing with the Department was in September 2010. The Department had questions and concerns with the comments and questions. For the EIS, a reasonable and foreseeable development scenario is developed. The BLM received approval from the Department in December 2010 for the EIS to be printed. Documents will be available to the public on February 18, 2011, and open for public comments for 45 days. Tribal meetings will be held February 21 to March 18, 2011. Meetings are scheduled on March 7th at the BLM National Training Center in Phoenix, March 8th in Flagstaff, March 9th at the Fredonia High School in Fredonia, and March 10th at the Homewood Suites in Salt Lake City. All public meetings will begin at 6 p.m.

DISCUSSION: Are all comments weighed as the same? Answer: Yes.

About 98 percent of the comments received are form letters. There will be a lot of political dialogue on this issue. The role of the BLM is to provide an objective report for the Secretary to make a decision.

The BLM is taking into account the economic benefits to the communities. Transporting the ore material has an indirect impact. The EIS total number of pages is just under 1,000. Each RAC member will receive a copy of the EIS, and it will also be available on the internet.

The RAC recommendations are not bounded by the public comment period, and this group will have an opportunity for additional discussion through the workgroup process.

When will the package be sent to the Secretary? Answer: It's not yet known until after we get through the public comment period. The role of the BLM is to lead an objective process.

As part of the permitting process, and approval of the Plans of Operations for existing mining claims, can you have certain requirements that they educate the communities? Answer: The BLM cannot require public education outreach, but can suggest it.

ACTION: N/A

AGENDA ITEM: Update on the Restoration Design Energy Project EIS (David Batts, Environmental Management and Planning Solutions, Inc. and Kathy Pedrick, BLM Project Manager)

Dave Butts and Kathy Pedrick reported on the Restoration Design Energy Project EIS which is being done to identify lands across Arizona that may be suitable for development of renewable energy, and to establish a baseline set of environmental protection measures for such projects.

The Draft Alternatives have been formulated. Scoping meetings are complete and Tribal consultation is underway. The target is to have a Draft out by the end of Fiscal Year 2011. The BLM will be sending out flyers, emails, and maybe have a webinar (web-based seminar/training). Working to meet community needs and also be environmentally responsible in the production of renewable energy.

A PowerPoint presentation was shown to the RAC.

DISCUSSION: RAC Input on the RDEP Project

- Double check screening criteria to ensure RAC input from March 18, 2010, is considered. (e.g., minerals and recreational settings)

- Load based near communities could have visual and “picky” issues that would make it less favorable (drop it down below other alternatives)
 - EIS needs to show tradeoffs
- Impacts on property values if REDAs are near communities.
- Local entities need to be included in process
 - Reference local land use plans
 - Show counties the local maps
- Maggie
 - Likes the Palo Verde generation park concept
 - Thinks that the document will be used by other agencies and counties to map the future of development.
 - Concept could be applied for other developments, etc.?
- Discussed G&F wildlife corridors; noted that the screening criteria are complete to address it.
- Eric – Load alternative may not be realistic in terms of demand (large load ctrs). Transmission line alternative is the most effective screen
- Carl noted that water is important; technology dependent
- Laura –
 - feels that green is the wrong color on the legend; suggests using orange
 - Need to make sure there is text about degraded sites being REDA, regardless if they are showing since we cannot identify all of them right now
 - Incentives: consider adding time frames for reviews of applications in REDA (e.g., review within “X” days)
 - Have utilities vet the transmission line base layer (send them the GIS layer of their lines)
- Glen –
 - Gives public a review of values of lands regardless of ownership.
 - Good tool for public dialogue. Green means go; and orange means stop.
 - The name RDEP may not fully capture the greater scope of the project (no longer just disturbed lands).
 - Show what lands are excluded because of water; conversely, what lands could be available if California wants to provide the water?
- Elizabeth –
 - Any communities that want these projects... nominated some of the sites.
 - More defined purpose and need statement
 - Screen criteria:

- List Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan (conservation land system).
 - Grow smarter program at the state level
 - Viewsheds from transmission line
 - Would like to see transmission and water together
- Steve
 - Transmission screen is important
 - Add that we had looked at solar/wind potential
 - Partnership concepts (e.g., focus on areas that can be developed in concert with other agencies, like Tribal and DoD lands e.g. Barry Goldwater Range)
- Restoration means different things to different people; need to define it or change name.
- Carolyn –
 - Add RAC actions from March 2010, with minerals and recreation settings
 - Need to be clear on information that we do not have. E.g., we may not have all the transmission lines since not all go to Arizona Corporation Commission (ACC) (if it does not go on the grid, no ACC).
 - Big push for renewable energy from mining and other industrial uses; not just transmission. Need to account for this (may not show up on a transmission line map)
 - May need to pull industrial use applications and add to load alternative.
- Eric –
 - Concerned about lands being designated first use for renewable energy
 - Clarify that towns are the municipal property
 - Look at other proposed conservation lands
 - Land exchanges – great potential to achieve multiple public policy goals. Do not take it off the table.
- Water –
 - Maybe look at water offset (e.g., AZ makes power, CA provides water).
Realistic?
 - Alt. 3 - Exclude technology, not wholesale exclusion of all renewable.
 -
- For public outreach –
 - Use poster with Mylar overlays so they can flip through it – interactive.
 - Could also use something on computer, like Google earth + interactive GIS (so you can play with acres). This way, public can see tradeoffs and their specific concerns.
- Terms between Solar PEIS and RDEP are inconsistent. Need to state why not adding to SEZs. Why REDA instead? (more encompassing of all renewables)

- Glen thinks that the Restoration Design Energy Project is a really good idea; so do a few others on the RAC!
- If RDEP incorporates SEZs; may need to take a harder look at them and modify as appropriate. Discussed Gillespie SEZ concerns from Steve (see enclosed handout).

Do REDAs include State and private lands as well as BLM lands? Answer: Yes.

Consideration needs to be given to minerals and high-value recreation sites.

Carl Taylor: Commented that based on the experience with wind farms, there are visibility issues. You will encounter a lot of resistance from the communities.

Norman Perry: Need to think about the possibility of the communities losing property tax revenues.

Richard Lunt: I understand what you're trying to do and the local communities need to be involved.

David Batts: Right now the process is for an application to be filed.

Maggie Sacher: This is a fabulous step to involve the communities. The handouts are great because now there is information to help keep the community informed. Existing wildlife corridors are on the map, but does it take into consideration future wildlife linkages?

Answer: Yes.

Laura Sagerman: This is a good idea. In terms of cartography it is counter intuitive to have the color green for areas suitable for renewable energy development projects. If an idea for a new site comes up (old mining site), would this be able to be added to the project list? Answer: Language would be incorporated to allow for this.

Laura Sagerman: What are the incentives to go to the head of the line in the application process? It's important before this goes for public review to make sure the utility data is correct.

Glen Collins: This is a great idea as it gets landowners and the public to look at potential sites without regard to land ownership. If the objective is to find solar sites, green is go and red is stop.

Elizabeth Buchroeder-Webb: Both myself and the public would prefer to hear what the mandates are and how they are going to be accomplished. There are statutory concerns with visual issues.

Steve Saway: Suggested adding to the PowerPoint presentation a slide showing partnership efforts.

Carolyn Loder: Add into the mapping high-value recreation settings and mineral validity.

Eric Gorsegrner: Is the green on the map the 4.5 million acres? Answer: No, the solar PEIS is 4,000 acres in Arizona that will be open and available for application.

Kathy Pedrick: Based on screening areas and public input the map shows where site locations are available. Individual site analysis still needs to be done.

Maggie Sacher: If this is feasible, it would be helpful to have the **gel**?(what are gel maps???) maps to show how many acres you are removing and how they stay where they are when educating the public.

Laura Sagerman: It would be useful to have interactive screen layers to show what happens to the map.

Glen Collins: It may be helpful to have an additional list or map to show lands that are excluded from solar energy due to a lack of water to protect groundwater supplies. It would be helpful if the RAC could endorse this proposal.

David Batts: We have a water alternative, so lands don't have to be excluded. The Arizona Department of Water Resources is in the process of identifying vulnerable groundwater areas.

Laura Sagerman: Do not eliminate Alternative 3, but have a water limitation. There needs to be more of an explanation of how everything is tied together. A larger map showing the PEIS would make it easier to understand.

Jim Kenna: We need to have the proper range of Alternatives in the document. When we go to build the Preferred Alternative, then the option is there. The cooperating agencies all need to be involved at the local level to reach an agreement. What is your thinking about the connection between these two processes? It is important that these two are compatible. Don't narrow the scope until we have the complete dialogue at the State level.

Glen Collins: This approach focuses on Arizona lands whether they are Federal, State or private lands.

Steve Saway: I applaud what you're doing with RDEP. Have a concern with the Gillespie solar energy zone. There are two NLCS units within 2 to 3 miles away. The Gillespie SEZ would cut off access to these units and affect the VRM and viewshed.

Eric Gorsegner: Still learning the jurisdictions. There needs to be some kind of institutional vessel where there is a meeting protocol for discussing this issue. There is no one agency for protocol to keep everyone moving ahead.

Jim Kenna: The problem does exist. We have the Governor's support and the commitment is still there. The BLM is committed to keeping this moving. We all work for the citizens. No entity owns all of the decisions and we need to work together.

Maggie Sacher: I see this document as very user friendly when completed.

Frances Werner: Land Use Planning is very different than in the past 10 years.

ACTION: Engage the RAC on this topic at the next meeting.

AGENDA ITEM: Update on the Renewable Energy Strategy (Julie Decker, BLM Deputy State Director for Resources)

Julie: Please see the maps and tables in your book. Tab 1 shows the active Arizona BLM solar and wind projects. The BLM is keeping a priority projects list. Sonoran Solar should be completed by the end of September 2011. They are now able to put 500 Mw on the site. This is a lower profile from the visual standpoint and will not have any water use. There are 4,000 acres in the DEIS.

The Quartzsite Solar Reserve is being managed by the Western Area Power Administration. The draft is progressing.

BP Wind Energy has had some noise issues with the National Park Service, so they are slowly progressing.

The Hyder Valley Solar Energy/Pacific Solar Investment project scoping report has been published.

DISCUSSION: Is this in demand by the local utilities? Answer: Yes, when there is a need.

How will water use be calculated and who is going to monitor? Answer: There are very specific processes with the State and local governments.

Since technology is quickly changing and the initial investment costs are high, is there an opportunity to later change the technology? Will another EIS need to be done? Answer: The EIS includes several alternatives and the public comments are supportive; however, the public is concerned about water use. Low water alternatives could be implemented.

Do you know what the height of the BP turbines will be? Answer: They have not yet decided the height yet and there are a few alternatives.

Is there any additional information on the Areva Solar project? Answer: The project is on hold.

ACTION: N/A

AGENDA ITEM: RAC Working Group Reports (RAC Working Group Chairs)

Rangeland Health and Livestock Grazing Working Group Report (Ty Kelly, Chair)

Ty Kelly, presiding chair, was absent. Bill Coulloudon provided a written quarterly report on permit reviews, past and future. The group was brought up to date on several lawsuits: grazing permit holders addresses (P.O. Boxes) are now a public record; a very recent 9th Circuit decision for the first time allows ranchers to join with agencies, the BLM and the Forest Service, to challenge lawsuits from such entities as Western Watersheds. There was a short discussion about reinvigorating the Rangeland Resource Teams as the second round of permit renewals begins. Some Field Offices are having difficulties finding people to serve. How can people representing different interests be persuaded to serve? All interested persons need to be made aware of the importance of having public input and the purpose of an RRT. Ms Sacher mentioned that she had served on the Strip RRT for seven years and she was enthusiastic about the process but feels that the field offices have to buy into it to be successful. The Field Office managers have been reviewing the RRT protocol for possible revisions. Scheduling the Standards and Guidelines training that is required of all new members (any member can attend) was discussed. This training introduces the process used in considering permit renewals using the standards and guidelines that were developed some years ago. The training includes field time so it is important to schedule it before it gets too hot. It will probably be held in the Phoenix area because of budget considerations although ideally it would be held in the Safford or Kingman area. Bill Coulloudon will be the coordinator.

Wild Horse and Burro Working Group Report (Larry Howery, Chair)

Roger Oyler provided a written quarterly report for the Arizona program. It included Field Office reports on future actions in the various herd management areas (HMAs). He also provided a report that was a compilation of comments about the WH&B program recorded at the public workshop that was held in Denver recently. He will provide the RAC with the revised WH&B Management Plan when the Secretary's office releases it. He will also provide information on the WH&B Advisory Board meeting that will be held in Phoenix in March when available.

Water and Healthy Landscapes Working Group Report (Richard Lunt, Chair)

Richard Lunt, chair was absent. Bill Wells, hydrologist in the state office, led the group discussion. For discussion re the BLM's role in the Water Commission that was set up in legislation passed in 2010 he provided a paper, Water Resources Development Commission, which outlines the Commission's mandate and its various work groups and the areas that they were to focus on. There are four major working groups: environmental, finance, population, and water supply and demand, and six sub-committees working under these. There is a very tight time line with a final report due this fall. Water needs to be seen as a commodity; what water will be used to satisfy continued population growth? Need to reduce water use? What about water quality? Need for new laws? Relationship between ground and surface water? Can the state come to any consensus on water policy? BLM lands are part of the watersheds in many areas and making sure that they are in a healthy condition will help to decrease water run-off. His materials included information on where the state's water comes from, water supplies and demands, and precipitation data. Serious discussions about water availability and use need to begin soon at all levels of government. Where does BLM fit into the equation and what should its water strategy be?

Energy - Minerals Working Group Report (Carolyn Loder, Chair)

Carolyn Loder, chair was absent; Glen Collins served as acting chair. Chris Horyza, project leader, provided an update on the Northern Arizona Minerals Withdrawal DEIS with a potential time-line for publication. It is expected that the document will be available on February 18th. The BLM/EPA Register Notice will be published and there will be a 45 day comment period. District Manager Scott Florence will hold meetings with the different tribes between February 21st and mid-March. There will be public Open Houses in Flagstaff, Fredonia, and Salt Lake and the public comments will be analyzed. Originally 83,000 comments from 90 countries were received; it is anticipated there may be as many as 200,000 on the draft. RAC members will be provided copies of the EIS document.

Renewable Energy Working Group Report (Norman Perry and Maggie Sacher, Co-Chairs)

Becky Heick, BLM Group Manager for Lands and Minerals presented the Solar Energy Development Programmatic EIS and the Restoration Design Energy Project EIS. The concept of zone designations and the programmatic alternatives were discussed. An update was provided on active alternative energy applications. Also, highlighted was the Sonoran Solar application change from concentrated solar to photovoltaic.

Recreation and Communities Working Group Report (Steve Saway, Chair)

The following topics were discussed by the Working Group on February 2nd but not discussed at the RAC meeting due to time constraints:

1. Land Use Plan Update. Chris Horyza gave the group a verbal update on the Lower Sonoran/Sonoran Desert NM and Ironwood Forest NM plans underway and other future efforts (Safford, Tucson, Kingman, San Pedro). RAC members expressed interest in reviewing these plans as per the RAC charter. As was done for previous planning efforts, interested RAC members could attend briefings at the State Office. The timing for IFNM is too late; however, a RAC review of the Lower Sonoran/SDNM plan could be scheduled before the next RAC meeting. An update of the Aravaipa Plan should be ready for the next RAC meeting per Tom Dabbs.
2. Secretarial Report 3310. Rem Hawes presented an update and passed out handouts. The Secretarial Order directed BLM to designate areas with wilderness characteristics in land use plans. Discussed distinctions between congressionally designated wilderness, wilderness study areas (WSAs), and lands with wilderness characteristics. RAC members posed questions and concerns regarding the impact on Arizona BLM land use plans. Is this a way to get around Congress to designate wilderness areas? The group expressed an interest in scheduling a more detailed discussion at a future RAC meeting.
3. Travel Management Plans. Bill Gibson gave the group a verbal update on plans underway in the Arizona Strip District, Colorado River District, Phoenix District, and Gila District. Ramone McCoy gave an update on the Havasu Plan and passed out a handout. Members of the public did not understand the process. There is a mechanism to propose additional routes. The public comment period will be extended. RAC members suggested ways to involve the public early, including reviewing route inventories and evaluations. Also, suggest more scoping meetings in the beginning and more extended comment periods. In comparison, it seems that Forest Service travel management plans offer public comment opportunities over a multi-year process.
4. Recreation Strategy Update. Don Applegate gave the group an update and passed out a handout. Focus is looking ahead for the next 3 years. Also it will position Arizona BLM for better funding. RAC members posed questions regarding the earlier RAC input and whether that will be carried forward. Also it was suggested to introduce the strategy by saying why you are doing this and why it is important. Per Julie Decker, there will be more follow-on details to go with the one page strategy.

Steve Saway summarized the Forest Service plans regarding the Sedona Red Rock Pass Program.. The Red Rock Ranger District is now engaged in a strategy to redefine high-impact recreation areas as a result of a court ruling. They are planning to present different fee scenarios to the public and gather public comment. The fee proposal should be ready for review at the May RAC meeting. We will need evidence of general public support before a fee proposal can be considered. The Forest Service is planning to have open house and focus group meetings to gather public comment.

DISCUSSION: Concerns expressed at a previous RAC meeting about this RAC also being used as a Recreation RAC (RRAC).

Jim Kenna: BLM has been assured by the Forest Service that they are doing a better job of meeting the concerns of the RRAC with respect to REA.

Steve Saway: It was discussed regarding having a RRAC meeting in Sedona, but due to budget constraints it may not be feasible. Because this is a controversial issue, the meetings should be held at a hotel and in conjunction with the RAC meeting timeframe, if necessary. The RAC suggested ideas on how to expand notification to the public and user groups. It appears from the discussion and briefing that this is the largest source of revenue for this District. When we have RRAC meetings with the full RAC, the fee proposal needs to be screened approximately one month prior (April) to the meeting, possibly via conference call. The REA Work Group was set up to do this. We need to see the fee proposal details, how well the Forest Service engaged the public, and the level of public support for the fee proposal.

To REA Work Group members: Frances, Glen, Norman, Maggie, and Steve Saway: If there is a Forest Service fee proposal, would you be willing to make a site visit to hear the proposal and take public comments? Answer: Yes.

Glen Collins: The Forest Service didn't invite us to a public meeting. They invited us to see the facilities that are being considered for a fee proposal. The RRAC shouldn't be involved in Forest Service (FS) public meetings. Let the FS bring the information to the RRAC.

Steve Saway: We found that any time we meet as a REA Work Group, these meetings must be open to the public. If members of the public wish to comment then we need to be available.

Maggie Sacher: The Forest Service has agreed to have comment cards at the sites. I don't think I can evaluate this large of an area without a presentation. We are obligated to do this right. If they can't work out the travel, I will have to go see it anyways; however, this should be done as a group.

Steve Saway: We should plan on convening a REA Work Group meeting in Sedona in April. A conference call capability can be set up to allow Work Group members to call in if they cannot attend in person.

Glen Collins (?): Need to let the Forest Service know that the REA Work Group is willing to convene a meeting in April. A Federal Register Notice must notify the public of the meeting 30 days prior.

ACTION: Work Group Chair to follow up on scheduling a meeting date and location.

AGENDA ITEM: Standards and Guidelines Training (Frances Werner)

DISCUSSION: It was suggested to have Standards & Guidelines training at the NTC. Need Bill Coulloudon to send out a Doodle poll to the RAC for available dates in April.

ACTION ITEM: N/A

AGENDA ITEM: Discussion on Future Agenda Items (BLM State Director, BLM Staff and RAC Members)**DISCUSSION:**

- Invite the different Friends Groups to future RAC meetings
- Invite the Conservation Lands Foundation to speak
- Further discussion on Secretary Salazar's Wildlands Designation
- Arizona BLM Recreation Strategy re: The President's Greater Outdoors Initiative
- Northern Arizona Withdrawal
- Water
- Energy issues

Motion made by Maggie Sacher for the RAC to write a letter to Kristine Uhlman thanking her for the outstanding presentation on Water Resources. The motion was seconded by Laura Sagerman.

The next Resource Advisory Council Meeting is May 5, 2010, at the BLM National Training Center.

MEETING ADJOURNED: approx. 4:30 p.m.

Enclosure: Handout Re Gillespie Solar Energy Zone

Draft
Solar Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS)
RAC Comments and Concerns
Gillespie Solar Energy Zone

1. Public Access, Safety, and Recreation. The Gillespie Solar Energy Zone (SEZ) is located along and contiguous to Agua Caliente Road, a scenic 49 mile long unpaved county road in western

Maricopa County. This road provides access to spectacular BLM lands with high value recreation settings, including Fourth of July Butte, Face Mountain, and the Gila Bend Mountains. Agua Caliente Road is expected to be designated a backcountry highway in the Lower Sonoran RMP that is underway. The BLM lands traversed by Agua Caliente Road offer exceptional opportunities for both motorized and non-motorized recreation, including hiking, hunting, wildlife viewing, camping, backcountry touring, outdoor photography, sightseeing, and rockhounding, and offer stunning views of pristine Sonoran Desert landscapes. In addition, access to the Signal Peak and Woolsey Peak Wilderness areas is via a jeep road that extends south from Agua Caliente Road. The Gillespie SEZ would close access to this OHV route and thus would close the primary access to these wilderness areas. It would also pose safety concerns to travelers on Agua Caliente Road who would have to drive through a gauntlet of solar utility plant equipment with glint and glare impacts. It would seem that solar energy developers would want to avoid placing expensive solar utility equipment so close to a public road, a situation inviting potential damage and liability concerns.

2. Visual Resource Management. The Gillespie SEZ would be visible from various National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS) units, including Signal Peak Wilderness, Woolsey Peak Wilderness, and the Sonoran Desert National Monument. The visual impact of solar utility plants and associated disturbed lands is not compatible with NLCS values. Woolsey Peak and Signal Peak Wilderness areas are only 2 and 3.5 miles respectively from the Gillespie SEZ.
3. Groundwater. The Gillespie SEZ is located in the Phoenix Active Management Area (AMA). Use of groundwater for solar energy equipment will be very problematic in this AMA.
4. Air Quality. The Gillespie SEZ is also located in Maricopa County, much of has been designated by the EPA as a non-attainment area for ozone and PM-10 dust particles. Ground disturbance associated with solar utility plant construction and operations will further exacerbate the County's PM-10 and air pollution impacts.
5. Bottom line: recommend the Arizona BLM review the Gillespie SEZ and carefully consider these RAC concerns as the Solar PEIS is finalized.