

Arizona Resource Advisory Council
Final Minutes
June 17, 2010

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

RAC Members in Attendance: Linda Binder, Bill Brake, Glen Collins, Jan Holder, Larry Howery, Ty Kelly, Carolyn Loder, Richard Lunt, Norman Perry, Maggie Sacher, Laura Sagerman, Steve Saway, Carl Taylor, Frances Werner

BLM Staff in Attendance: Don Applegate, Dorothea Boothe, Angie Buletts, Kelly Castillo, Scott Florence, Chris Horyza, Jim Kenna, Angie Lara, Kathy Pedrick, Patrick Putnam, Davina Wilkins

Presenters and Guests: Philip Bashaw, Lisa Controras Handler, Thom Hulen, Chris Parish, Dan Shein

Meeting Called to Order (Frances Werner, RAC Chair)

AGENDA ITEM: BLM State Director's Introduction (Jim Kenna, State Director)

DISCUSSION: Mr. Kenna gave updates about the BLM Arizona's recent work. He announced Ray Suazo was named BLM Arizona's new Associate State Director and said he is doing a great job. There was another call for RAC nominations after the original May 1 deadline, because enough applications had not been received. The 30-day extension was intended to allow for a full complement of applications. Mr. Kenna also thanked the five RAC members whose terms would expire at the end of this year.

Mr. Kenna also gave updates on his trips back to Washington D.C. He travelled to D.C. for his usual Hill visit to discuss water issues, border, energy, as well as other topics important to Arizona. He was invited back to discuss border and uranium issues. He said the BLM's role in the Grand Canyon uranium withdrawal issue is to prepare a report for the Secretary of the Interior offering a set of choices for dealing with the issue. He said the work the RAC did on the Uranium question was important to the process. He wanted to thank them for that. He said it added value to the process and they would be discussing it again in the future.

On the topic of renewable energy, Mr. Kenna said he had been looking at the work other countries have been doing on alternative energy. He said he recently had a discussion with Senator Kyl about water issues and energy. He said some of the financial incentives to get renewable energy projects up and running are driving some of the policies in this country. RAC members pointed out that the Arizona governor has tried to put some of the focus on the renewable energy's importance to Arizona's economy.

Mr. Kenna said there have been a number of incidents that have raised attention to border issues recently. The shooting of the deputy sheriff in Vekol Valley and a shooting at a BLM ranger were two such issues. However, incidents on some parts of the border are way down. The tendency is to talk about the border in sweeping ways, he said, but the numbers don't suggest that is true. The area around Vekol Valley has gotten a lot of attention from smugglers. Though temporary BLM signs have gotten some negative publicity, no land is being ceded to Mexico. The focus is to keep people safe. The BLM has been working closely with Border Patrol and other agencies.

Planning is underway for the celebration of the 10th Anniversary of the National Landscape Conservation. The RAC can help with advice, the State Director said, on how to use the community ties made for the NLCS 10th anniversary celebrations. These ties could be used to connect with youth –i.e. getting youth outdoors, youth employment, etc.

The State Director concluded his update by talking about the state's progress with its ARRA funds. The BLM Arizona received \$16.9 million in ARRA funds. The goal is to complete the contracts by the end of June, 2010. The main goal at the Arizona BLM was to maximize job potential. Employing youth is a very important component of the ARRA program, and nine assistance agreements were funded.

Mr. Kenna opened the discussion up to questions from the RAC.

RAC member Bill Brake said he leased BLM land in southern Arizona and said there are dangerous people on that land at night often; he said two people were recently picked up, and one was a child molester. He said he now wears a bulletproof vest on that land and doesn't feel the land belongs to him or the BLM anymore. Mr. Kenna replied that the BLM is working jointly with other agencies like ICE and Border Patrol to get a handle on the problem. It will take time, but progress is being made he said. Richard Lunt, said he realized the border issues were a highly political topic, but the conversation had a human side as well. He said people are no longer using their own land out of fear, and that is a serious problem. Ty Kelly made the statement that he lives about 400 miles north of the border and has had immigrants walk by his house and had shootouts on his land.

Steve Saway asked Mr. Kenna if Senator Kyl had made any suggestions about the water issues during their discussion on the topic. Mr. Kenna replied that it was too early to tell.

ACTION: N/A

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

DISCUSSION: Referring to the Managers' reports, Steve Saway noted the "listening session" that BLM had with conservation organizations regarding the Sonoran Desert and Ironwood Forest National Monuments. It's important also to get the views and perspectives of other interests such as recreational groups Bill Brake echoed those concerns. Glen Collins continued by saying that it takes a lot of work to prepare a report like this. He asked if the reports were used for broader purposes and suggested they be used for the BLM's own employees or for the public. Angie Bullets, the BLM Phoenix District Manager, said her office's public affairs officer, Pamela Mathis, is great. She puts out a similar type of weekly report for the Phoenix staff. Mr. Kenna suggested taking the Phoenix's type of report and using a shortened version on the web. Carl Taylor also complemented the District Managers' reports.

Laura Sagerman asked the managers how work on the ARRA projects, having such short deadlines, have been accomplished within NEPA guidelines. Jim Kenna answered that the projects chosen for ARRA funding were those that already had NEPA studies underway.

ACTION: Consider duplicating the Phoenix weekly staff newsletter model for a wider, statewide audience.

BREAK

AGENDA ITEM: California Condor Reintroduction Program (Chris Parish, Peregrine Fund)

DISCUSSION: Chris Parish from the Peregrine Fund gave a presentation on the California Condors. The California Condor is the largest flying bird in North America, with a 9 ½ foot wing span. It has one chick every other year and doesn't breed until it is 8-years-old. Its main causes of death are lead poisoning, predation, impaction, and infection. His organization, with the support of organizations like the BLM, US Forest Service, and AZ Game and Fish, has been working to save the birds and reintroduce them back into the wild. He said thanks to their work, these birds can be found in Arizona and Southern Utah, the largest release area of its kind for the birds. There are a total of 72 birds in the AZ/UT population, with 13 awaiting release in flight pens. Mr. Parish said a decline in the birds' population was found through the "Lead Bullet Fragmentation Study," which examined the linkage between lead ammunition and condor

populations. It found that condors had ingested lead from vital organs left behind by deer hunters. The Study concluded that lead shot played a significant role in the condors decline. In the first year of the non-lead ammo program in Arizona, over 50% of hunters participated and lead deaths of condors went down. The Peregrine Fund is seeking help from sportsman's stores and trying to educate hunters about non-lead ammunition.

Maggie Sacher pointed out that the Arizona lottery tickets help fund the Peregrine Fund's work, and told the room that if anyone was going to buy lottery tickets they should buy Arizona lottery tickets, because Powerball tickets don't help such programs. Larry Howery pointed out that waterfowl hunters are required to use steel shot (bullets). Jan Holder asked if Wal-Mart was one of the businesses cooperating in the non-lead ammunition campaign. Mr. Parish answered that they are carrying some of the ammunition, but if they would do more, he said, it would help.

ACTION: N/A

**AGENDA ITEM: BLM Arizona National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS)
Strategy (Mark Lambert)**

DISCUSSION: Mark Lambert, BLM Ironwood Forest National Monument Manager, discussed NLCS Strategy for community engagement and presented the following notes from the Working Group meeting on the previous day.

Purpose:

Present current NLCS AZ Strategy to RAC and get feedback on how it can be strengthened, particularly with regard to getting the most out of our community interface efforts.

RAC Comments:

- Use RAC and Friends/other partner groups to identify and overcome obstacles to executing our strategy that BLM may not be able to identify/overcome on its own. For example, Carl is assisting in efforts to acquire DOT signs for NLCS units.
- Pursue acquiring "Trail Blazer" signs that lead motorists to our established gateway information spaces.
- Disseminate information through retailers such as REI, Cabela's, Sportsman's Warehouse, and Summit Hut. These retailers also offer presentation venues for friends groups or BLM to present info. to public.
- Develop dual messages for rural AZ vs. metro AZ. Metro AZ often does not even know what BLM is, much less NLCS, so the message needs to be tailored to them.

- There is no mention of "public use and enjoyment" in the strategy, but this needs to be explicitly stated. The ultimate goal of these areas is how they can be used appropriately. Specifically, the Conservation System Values emphasis area needs to incorporate "public enjoyment" into the values we focus on and protect. In addition, access needs to be addressed in the strategy and the message we convey to the public. However, we need to be cognizant of the specific charter of each area in developing the message – "public enjoyment" is not a component of the charter for some NLCS areas. How do we convey this "public enjoyment" message for units where it is not explicitly part of the area's purpose?
- Look at the strategy from the eyes of the public. For example, one NLCS unit is better known to many as Game Unit 37b. Develop message so that it relates to all users, including hunters and other groups.
- Having a consistent message is critical to the success of the strategy. Develop a consistent message at a state-wide level and then add to it for the specific NLCS units or when presenting to specific constituent groups that need the message tailored. Focus on commonalities of the units in the system. A missing piece of strategy is that there is no consistent, canned message; no talking points developed. Develop this message and then establish a process to have it disseminated without BLM staff resources -- use partners, volunteers, businesses, etc.
- The public easily gets confused with so many different designations and the "National Landscape Conservation System" title. This will be a challenge as BLM crafts a message that can reach our constituents.
- Is the strategy matched by adequate staff time and resources? Building and nurturing a friends group takes a lot of TLC and questions of whether BLM has the capacity to do this. Keeping the group afloat once it is established also takes constant care. Is staff too limited to take this on?
- A critical group to be linked to that is often overlooked is realtors. The population of AZ is expected to increase dramatically over the next decades and the first information folks receive upon arriving to the state is from realtors and chambers of commerce. Get the NLCS message to these groups for wide, quick dissemination.
- Make sure this strategy is consistent with and incorporates concepts from the President's new Great Outdoors Initiative.
- Designate a BLM representative to attend "Be Outdoors AZ" meetings.
- Be sure to identify all the groups that might have an interest in a given area, and groups that you want to get the message to. Groups that may be overlooked:
 - NRCDs

- Cooperative Extensions
 - FFA (youth)
 - 4-H (youth)
 - Gem & Mineral Shows
 - Schools (include home school students)
 - County and State Fairs
- Come up with some "best management practices" for implementing the strategy and disseminate these at the statewide level.
 - In focusing on youth do not lose sight of seniors and what they value and can offer.
 - In developing youth programs, it will be much more effective and cost efficient to piggyback on existing programs and incorporate a BLM component such as a developed curriculum, field trips, short presentations, etc.

The following advice came out of the full RAC discussion of the NLCS strategy:

- The economic benefit of these NLCS units needs to be made very clear to the nearby communities. That is the best way to get buy-in and engagement and for some communities the only way.
- Make sure community services are featured in our material, whether it be a link to chamber of commerce or specific services. Seek to put NLCS units on community web sites too.
- Each unit needs an identifier, or perhaps more than one that people can identify with. Vermilion Cliffs = condors; San Pedro = birding; Ironwood = desert vegetation; Weave this identifier into the message that is marketed.
- BLM needs more knowledge of what each community's interests are. Take the time to ask the community – what is important to you and what can our role be in assisting with that? Then weave your message and actions into the community priorities.
- These are landscapes that can attract a variety of visitors who use the area for different purposes. BLM needs to better develop access guides and maps so that places are perceived as accessible.
- The strategy seems to miss being directed at the general public. The general public needs to know that these places are there for them to enjoy, in an appropriate way. The urban public is especially disconnected from the BLM and NLCS message.
- Do not ignore the perception that these Monuments and other designations were created to lock people out and limit use. While this is not the case, this is a widely held perception and it needs to be confronted head on. Proactively market the areas to bring

disenfranchised users back to the fold. Work to dispel the notion that these areas are only for “hikers” now.

- Focusing on communities of place is important, but do not lose sight of the communities of interest. These groups can be formed with BLM involvement and then can be self-sustaining thereafter, and they do very valuable work for BLM, ranging from on-the-ground projects and getting the message out.
- BLM should develop material for NLCS units that highlights some of the quick, shorter activities that could be enjoyed. Many visitors don’t have the time or the intent to spend an entire day in these areas, but want to experience them nonetheless. So provide material that allows for these kinds of opportunities.
- Message for specific units needs to be focused around, “XX is what you can see here.” Provide a clear message to visitors about what they can expect, and make it appealing.

State Director Jim Kenna summarized the message he was receiving from the RAC as follows:

- Pay attention to messaging and information design. Make it welcoming, point out key features, and develop good materials.
- Focus on communication and delivery options. Be aware of all the various venues that can be utilized.
- Build relationships. Learn the interests and needs of local communities and visitors.
- There are cross-relationships between communities of interest and communities of place; we need to pay attention to this crossover and work within it.

Jim Kenna asked the group to think about the Vermilion Cliffs, Agua Fria and Black Canyon City. He asked, “How do we ensure we have community connections, and how do we get our visitors to connect with the communities our lands are neighboring?” He said they were never intended to have structured visitor centers. Carl Taylor said the Agua Fria is a hard place to find; when he talks to people from other countries, they found it on the internet. He said we should have community information on our website. Frances Werner said she was thinking the opposite; she suggested we have the cities and towns link to BLM’s website. Bill Brake said we have to identify who the BLM is and what the organization wants to promote. That is the fundamental thing. Without identity there is no reason to go there. Norman Perry said Arizona State University just released a study that reported that people in rural areas of Arizona rate their communities high, but their neighbors low. He said that has to be in the BLM’s minds when they are trying to recruit people in those areas to attend meetings.

Steve Saway suggested BLM produce maps and brochures about the NLCS lands in Arizona. Glen Collins said “enjoyment” is a better word than “recreation” strategy; the public needs to know they are there for their enjoyment.

Mr. Collins and Mr. Saway went on to point out that the public doesn't understand that the lands are for them to come to enjoy. They said there is an idea in the general public's mind they are not welcome there. The Agua Fria National Monument not being known to Phoenix residents was given as the example. Ms. Sacher suggested a booth at the state fair to better market the BLM to the public. Mr. Perry pointed out that to people whose first language is not English, the word conservation means "go away, stay away, go someplace else." Richard Lunt added that the BLM has been gradually restricting the uses of public land. They have to show people that public land is a place that people can use and enjoy. Mr. Collins said one way to make them more inviting is to give them meaningful geographic names.

MOTION: Glen Collins made a motion to have the Recreation and Communities Working Group Chair (Steve Saway) refine the draft RAC NLCS comments/suggestions, circulate that to the RAC, and finalize the paper for the RAC Chair to send on to the Arizona BLM State Director. Carolyn Loder seconded the motion. It was passed unanimously.

ACTION: Brochures and maps of the NLCS units; A booth at the state fair. The RAC will send the State Director an updated recommendation for the NLCS Arizona Strategy.

AGENDA ITEM: The Public Comment Period

DISCUSSION: Philip Bashaw of the Arizona Farm Bureau Federation read letters addressed to the RAC from the Arizona Farm Bureau Federation and from the Mohave County Farm Bureau and Mohave Livestock Association citing the economic benefits of livestock grazing on federal lands and protesting the repetitious legal challenges by environmental groups like the Western Watersheds Project, which are designed to tie up BLM staff, processes and funding that should be used in managing the public rangelands for livestock and wildlife. Copies of the two letters are attached and made a part of these minutes.

ACTION: None

AGENDA ITEM: BLM Update on Renewable Energy Development by Kelly Castillo, Acting DSD Resources, Eddie Arreola, RECO Project Leader and Kathy Pedrick, Restoration Design Energy Project Manager

Eddie Arreola gave a PowerPoint presentation about the RECO program and updates on the program progress. He said the Hyder Valley scoping meeting was scheduled for the day prior and the day before that. He said everyone wanted the project to go forward, but no one wanted their water levels affected. He referenced the Dateland hearings as an example.

Maggie Sacher asked if the Palo Verde used no water. Mr. Arreola answered that it proposed using water only for cleaning. It uses the Fresnel lens technology. Richard Lunt asked if they were considering how Renewable energy affects multiple-use of an area. Mr. Arreola replied that the BLM tries to identify areas that have little public recreation usage, and notifies any existing permittees. The company then negotiates with the permittees.

Ty Kelly asked about the dry cool vs. wet cool process. Mr. Arreola said wet is a faster process especially in summer. Mr. Collins asked whether the company which had proposed the generating tower in the Quartzite area had considered using the nearby State Trust land. Mr. Arreola explained that the company had originally approached the State Land Department, but that solar energy companies don't like the State's competitive bidding process and the 10 year limit on a State Lease. They like the BLM because the environmental clearances are done up front and the BLM can give a 30 year lease.

Norman Perry pointed out that the projects Mr. Arreola used in his examples would use, using their numbers, 650 million gallons per year and 1.8 gallons per year, respectively. Ms. Sacher suggested using gallons rather than acre feet in examples from now on.

Carl Taylor said he favored the BLM having a graduated scale of preferred sites. He said a water intensive solar system makes no sense in a desert state. He is against anything using a billion gallons of ground water.

Steve Saway noted that the Sonoran Solar project had some potential impacts on access routes and some VRM (glare) issues.

Kathy Pedrick followed up with a brief presentation about the Restoration Design Energy Project. The project encourages renewable energy development projects on already disturbed lands. A contract had been awarded that day.

ACTION: N/A

LUNCH

AGENDA ITEM: Striking a Balance with the BLM Arizona Water Strategy (Chris Horyza)

DISCUSSION: Chris Horyza reported on the previous day's RAC Water and Healthy Landscapes Working Group meeting which discussed possible ways to mitigate water use by large concentrating solar thermal electrical generating plants. Arizona has the sunshine for solar

energy, but solar thermal energy development requires lots of water, and water is scarce in Arizona. The Working Group identified three groups of possible mitigations:

Planning Decisions

1. Give preference to applications on BLM land to companies who are not using groundwater.
2. Prioritize groundwater basins to identify those that could support groundwater extraction.
3. Establish exclusion zones where ground water extraction would or could affect surface water, such as springs for wildlife use.
4. Encourage development along the CAP where water for cooling or aquifer recharge can be purchased from water owners.

Inter-agency Coordination, Regulations, or Monitoring

1. BLM recommend to State DWR to limit types of uses of groundwater.
2. Rewrite or strengthen regulations on water uses.
3. Just don't allow wet cooling.
4. Use preferred technology approaches. (Encourage use of low or no water use technologies.)
5. Develop a formula that addresses plant operating efficiency that considers water consumed, size of the footprint, and non-renewable resources used; and use that formula to calculate rental rate so more efficient plants pay less. This would encourage more efficient use of the land.
6. Establish a compliance monitoring protocol that would be paid for by the grantee. Monitoring would be conducted regularly or continuously and include:
 - a. water usage
 - b. aquifer protection
 - c. other environmental compliance requirements

Possible Mitigations for Water Usage

1. Use waste water or recharge water for cooling instead of ground water.
2. Allow wet cooling to be used in places that can sustain it... for example, in groundwater basin that have sufficient recharge and low enough other water use that the basin can sustain the use.
3. Retire wells up to an equivalent amount of water that would be used in the same groundwater basin.
4. Use non-or low water usage technology for on-site hygiene such as showers, toilets, sinks, etc.
5. Trade energy for water.
6. If development is near enough to CAP, water for cooling or aquifer recharge can be purchased from water owners.

The following additional measures were developed in the June 17 discussions by the full RAC. These measures could be part of a project proposal or required by stipulation. These measures could be applied in any appropriate combination based on the specific watershed setting and project proposal.

1. Site selection based on suitability for wet cooling because the groundwater basins in which a project is located can sustain the use.
2. Use of waste or recycled water for wet and dry cooling process instead of ground water.
3. Use low water use technology for on-site facilities (low-flow toilets, shows, etc.).
4. Market transfer of water currently in use through purchase and retirement of water rights from willing sellers.
5. Provisions for retirement of water wells in the groundwater basin up to an equivalent amount of water or a greater amount that would be used for energy production.
6. Offset effects to private wells in project drawdown area by drilling affected well to deeper/productive levels.
7. Use vegetation treatments affecting invasive or expansive species (e.g. Tamarisk removal) to alter evapotranspiration and offset water consumption for project.
8. Purchase conservation easement in an area of critical water resources need to offset project water development and consumptive use.
9. Mitigate water usage by land trades that give the solar energy developer low resource value public lands (e.g., lands available for disposal) in exchange for high resource value non-federal lands that offer no net loss of water resources.

Laura Sagerman said she would like to see proven mitigation that would be effective as a starting point. She said some sound good, but may not work very well. Mr. Horyza said the current analyses are in the Sonoran EIS. Ms. Sacher suggested that some of the companies will already have equipment to drill wells; they could provide the equipment as a service to the communities they are in. Mr. Lunt said if you destroy the farms, the cities will dry up. He said we all need power, but water is the life blood of the west; let's make sure that we don't do something that down the road will be devastating. Mr. Collins added that solar as an energy source was sold to us in Arizona, because we had all the sunshine. He said now the Kyl report and other studies show us that we need water we don't have. The report also shows that we are shipping that energy to other states, he said and maybe Arizona should consider trading energy for the water that other States have.

Mr. Kelly suggested the companies might clean up a mile of river that uses up so much water, clearing up habitat that is using up water unnecessarily, to use that water for their own needs. Trading mitigation to restore wetlands ...

Jan Holder said one of the important things to the Safford area is the Indian water rights settlement. It would be great to buy up land and use it for development; it has a multitude of different factors. One has to weigh the factors in that community. If not, you'll always be comparing apples to oranges. She said quality of life is never really considered in an EIS. She said rather than looking at simply retiring agricultural land, put in place a way to leave the land open.

Ms. Sagerman said some companies do this better than others. If we require enough mitigation, it may affect it enough to change the technology.

After some further discussion, Maggie Sacher called a motion to submit to the State Director the two page Solar Water Use Mitigation document adding items from the full RAC discussion (see attachment). The motion was seconded by Ty Kelly.

The Chair Called for the vote. All were in favor except: Bill Brake, Richard Lunt, Carolyn Loder and Ty Kelly.

Steve Saway said I think in the context of what we are doing, there may be times when saying no may be appropriate (referring to the vote).

AGENDA ITEM: Next Steps for Water Strategy – Preparing for the Next RAC Meeting

Water Strategy Discussion

Preparation for September RAC Meeting and Discussion

1. Meet with Robert Glennon (UA) to discuss water issues.
2. Presentation concerning the legal water rights framework that affects BLM land.
3. Meet with Herb Gunther to talk about water rights and DWR.
4. Better understand the legal framework surrounding managing waters.
5. Meet with water advisory councils where they exist on priority waters (Partnerships).

Issues

1. In-stream flow water rights.
2. Affects of water use across the international; border in Mexico... i.e. upper San Pedro River.
3. Authorization of usage that affects spring flows.
4. Transferability of water.

Water Strategy Suggestions

1. Develop a "Water Ethic."
2. May not be able to control use of spring water, but develop policy concerning pipelines and ROWs crossing BLM from springs and seeps.

3. If you put 10 streams on a list and make them important, they will become important to other people too.

Maggie Sacher said it would be helpful for standards and guidelines training to be set up. A riparian guide and a BLM definition of riparian would be good. To BLM, riparian is only about areas with water, but to me areas that once had water but all the water was sucked out is still riparian, just poorly managed.

Mr. Kelly asked about the San Pedro and how the BLM is dealing with a drying river and growing communities around it. What is the BLM's role?

Mr. Kenna said a rancher told him a story about a swimming hole that no longer exists for his grandkids. He said we can't be afraid to have the conversation about the Arizona we want or about this arid state.

Linda Binder suggested inviting someone from ADWR to speak to the RAC.

Steve Saway suggested adding to the list (a) developing best practices and (b) collaborating with watershed groups.

ACTION ITEM: Invite guest from ADWR to speak with the RAC

AGENDA ITEM: Report from the Energy Working Group – Solar and Wind

Norman Perry and Maggie Sacher reported on the Sonoran Solar Public Hearing. The BLM Staff was requested to make a presentation at the next RAC meeting on the process for compliance by users of BLM lands for renewable energy.

There was concern that the reports in the Arizona BLM handouts conflict with BLM Washington Office estimates of solar water usage, and BLM staff will research this. BLM staff reported that the Solar EIS was on track.

The RAC comments on renewable energy which have recently been sent to the State Director were specifically related to solar energy. Norman Perry will take the lead in collecting RAC comments on wind energy, and will prepare a proposed paper for the RAC Chair to send to the State Director.

Items for the September RAC meeting, the Working Group include:

1. Review and discuss "synopsis of comments" related to wind renewable energy
2. Confirmation of water Usage per mega watt of parabolic trough production of electricity

3. Report on actions/process for BLM to ensure full compliance with contractual conditions by renewable energy (solar/wind) producers
4. Issue and Report on “Solar Energy Applications”

AGENDA ITEM: Report from the S&G Working Group

The working group discussed several issues covering topics from Permit renewals to RRT development. The BLM was able to fully process 15 permits by the end of the second quarter in 2010. Concern was addressed about pending lawsuits delaying the permit renewal process throughout the state and what actions the RAC can take to support the BLM. A few possible solutions came forward with the RAC supporting the BLM and better BLM “technique” was suggested to try to solidify BLM management plans and minimize the opportunity for outside groups to hold up BLM decisions in court.

RRT development and S&G training for RAC members were also topics that were addressed. This fall seemed to be a possible new goal for S&G training and spurring interest in RRT members.

AGENDA ITEM: Report from Recreation and Communities Working Group (Steve Saway, Chair)

Steve Saway summarized the following topics discussed during the previous day’s meeting. (This excludes discussion of the NLCS Strategy which is addressed elsewhere in the RAC meeting minutes).

1. Land Use Planning Update. The group reviewed the Arizona Land Use Planning Update report dated June 2010. Chris Horyza, BLM NEPA Coordinator, provided additional comments as follows:
 - a. Sonoran Desert National Monument. Staff is making progress. Possibility of the RAC’s review in the September timeframe.
 - b. Ironwood Forest National Monument. The plan is nearly ready for the RAC’s review. A RAC briefing should be scheduled soon.
2. Travel Management Update. The group had requested a written report on travel management plans similar to the Land Use Planning Update report but this request was not met. The group did receive a handout listing travel management plans by field office, but there was no information on current status, public comment periods, etc. which the group had requested. No staff was available to explain and discuss the handout. The Chair stressed that travel management is of big interest to the public and is the subject of many constituent

concerns. The working group wishes to be engaged in these plans. The RAC should be notified via email when public comment periods are announced for travel management plans. The Chair noted that the following travel management plans were mentioned in the Field Managers Report: Table Mesa, Lake Havasu, La Posa, and the Middle Gila Canyons.

3. Recreational Access to Wire Pass Trailhead (House Rock Valley Road crossing at Buckskin Gulch). Scott Florence, Arizona Strip District manager, provided background on the issue and summarized the current status. Kane County Utah stopped maintaining county roads on BLM lands about two years ago. The crossing at Buckskin Gulch becomes impassable at times. This affects public access to the State Line campground and Wire Pass trailhead (including Coyote Buttes and the Wave). The Utah BLM is working the issue but is not hopeful. In January 2011, there will be two new Kane County commissioners. This might result in a policy change. There is no action for the RAC to take at this time except to monitor the issue.

4. REA Schedule Update. The Chair announced that Jeff Saari of the Forest Service had informed him that there are no plans to bring fee changes to the RAC at this time. Though the Tonto National Forest had planned to brief the RAC on proposed fee changes at the September 2010 meeting, this action was cancelled due to direction from the Washington Office. Due to the state of the economy and public concerns over fee increases, the Forest Service has placed a nationwide freeze on their recreation fees. Jeff will let us know as future developments occur.

AGENDA ITEM: Report from the Wild Horse and Burro Working Group

Linda Binder, Wild Horse & Burro Working Group Member provided a personal statement that was distributed to the full RAC. It is attached below.

AGENDA ITEM: Discussion on Future Meetings/Locations/Proposed Agenda Items

DISCUSSION: The conversation centered around having the next meeting before the appointments run out. Ms. Sacher suggested inviting a Friends group to talk to the RAC to learn about what they are doing and how they interface with the community. Mr. Perry suggested using the Doodle calendar program to canvas the members to set the next meeting date. Mr. Kenna said a vote may be needed on the solar issue, the uranium withdrawal and the Wild Horse & Burro proposal. Mr. Lunt suggested Standards and Guidelines training, but Ms. Werner suggested that be done after new appointees begin their term.

ACTION ITEM: Set date for next meeting

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to adjourn was made, seconded, and approved and meeting adjourned at 4:00 PM

FUTURE ACTION ITEMS:

- Duplicate the Phoenix weekly staff newsletter model for a wider, statewide audience.
- Create brochures and maps for the NLCS units
- Have a booth at the state fair
- The RAC will send the State Director an updated recommendation for the NLCS Arizona Strategy.
- Have someone from ADWR speak to the RAC
- Set Date for next meeting