United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Glenwood Springs Field Office
Glenwood Springs, Colorado 81602

RAC SUBGROUP MEETING #2

Glenwood Springs Field Office
Wednesday, December 5, 2007 (5:00 PM – 8:00 PM)

Meeting Location: BLM Energy Office (2425 Grand Avenue, Glenwood Springs, CO)

SUMMARY NOTES

Attendees: Chris Beebe, Steve Dahmer, Taylor Hawes, Michael Kennedy, Sherry Long, Larry McCown, Ken Neubecker, Greg Noss, Kurt Schultz, Steve Smith, Tom Turnbull, Karen Witt, Jeff O'Connell (BLM), Jamie Connell (BLM), Carla DeYoung (BLM), Brian Hopkins (BLM), Kay Hopkins (BLM), David Batts (EMPS Inc.), Angie Adams (Tetra Tech, Inc.).

Handouts:

- Agenda
- Highlights of the RMP process to date (December 2007)
- Appendix C of BLM Land Use Planning Handbook H-1601-1 (March 2005)
- Glenwood Springs and Kremmling Field Offices RMP Revision – Evaluation of Proposed Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) (November 2007)
- Map: ACEC Nominations in GSFO
- Map: Recommended ACECs – 67,781 acres – Glenwood Springs Field Office
- Table/matrix: Existing and Potential GSFO Special Recreation Management Areas – Draft (12/5/07)
- Map of RMAs (Recreation Management Areas) and SRMAs (Special Recreation Management Areas)
- Map of GSFO BLM SRMAs and Recreation Sites

WELCOME

David Batts welcomed everyone and thanked them for their participation. Round robin of introductions.

PLANNING UPDATE

- Send RAC Subcommittee contact list to members.
- How to define a quorum for RAC Subcommittee?
    - RAC quorum requires representation from all categories.
    - Steve Smith and Tom Turnbull attended the RAC meeting in Glenwood Springs on November 8, 2007. The RAC discussed the procedure for forming the RAC Subcommittee during that meeting.
    - Because we do not have specific categories in the RAC Subcommittee, perhaps that is not required here.
    - Consider using simple majority. There are 14 members (not including RAC member), which would require 8 for a majority.
    - Consider informally recognizing whether or not absent members may have opinions on the subject.
    - Motion to use a simple majority (8 for a majority) requiring adequate representation from the different special interest categories. Motion was seconded. Agreed: all; disagreed: none.
- See handout "highlights of the RMP process to date (December 2007)."
- See handout "Appendix C of BLM Land Use Planning Handbook H-1601-1 (March 2005)."

  - This outlines all resources and resource uses that must be discussed in an RMP. It lists the land use plan-level decisions that must be made in the RMP. The RMP will not make implementation-level decisions, except for travel management.
- BLM GSFO and KFO have been continuing with alternatives development. They are still in the preliminary draft stage. We will present some alternatives to this group tonight and at future meetings. Keep in mind that there are several resources and resource uses that we will develop as we proceed.

SHORT REVIEW OF RMP PLANNING PROCESS

- Refer to handout: "RMPs – Overview of the Project and Planning Process (December 2007)."

RESOURCE/RESOURCE USE DISCUSSIONS WITH GSFO STAFF

- Refer to handout "BLM Glenwood Springs & Kremmling Field Offices RMPs/EIS, Preliminary Draft Alternatives (Version: December 4, 2007), Presented to Cooperating Agencies & RAC Subcommittees on December 5, 2007 (includes Air, Soil, and Water resources)."
- Angie Adams (Tetra Tech): Walked through preliminary draft alternatives matrix for Air, Soil, and Water:
  - Based on the November 2007 RAC Subcommittee meeting, the group asked us to bring some alternatives and ideas to the group for consideration and feedback. That is what this matrix is for Air, Soil and Water. There are about two dozen other resources and resource uses that are in the larger working alternatives matrix that the BLM interdisciplinary teams are working on and we will bring to this group over time.
  - Matrix includes four alternatives across top row, Alternatives A, B, C, and D. Alternative A is "no action" or BLM's current management based on its current RMPs, amendments, etc. This is how the land is being managed now.
  - The decisions included in this matrix reflect the required "land use plan-level" decisions from BLM Land Use Planning Handbook Appendix C (handed out to group today). The matrix does not include "implementation/project/activity-level" decisions, which are also outlined in Appendix C. The only implementation-level decisions that will be included in this RMP and in the alternatives matrix are related to travel management planning, which will happen after the RMP alternatives are more complete for all the other resources/resources uses.
  - Matrix includes Goals, Objectives, and Actions. Goals are broad desired conditions; objectives are ideally specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time-fixed; and actions include allocations, management actions, and monitoring actions to meet objectives. This three-tiered system was not in place during the 1984 RMP, so in some cases Alternative A (current management) may not line up perfectly with the other alternatives or may be blank (we did not make up current management where it did not exist).
  - Everything within each alternative (vertically within the matrix) must be compatible within that alternative, so management decisions within water must be compatible with decisions under energy, for example.
  - Matrix does not include all standard operating procedures, best management practices, and things that BLM has to do to follow regulations/law. The matrix includes only those decisions that BLM needs in the RMP so they have a tool to manage the land accordingly.
  - The RMP is issue based, and the range of alternatives responds to the 12 scoping issues.
  - The matrix is not intended to cover impact analysis (which will occur as part of the Environmental Impact Statement process); the matrix covers the decisions about how BLM will manage lands.
  - On projection screen, BLM showed the preliminary draft alternatives matrix (same as the handout "BLM Glenwood Springs & Kremmling Field Offices RMPs/EIS, Preliminary Draft Alternatives [Version: December 4, 2007], Presented to Cooperating Agencies & RAC Subcommittees on December 5, 2007 [includes Air, Soil, and Water resources]") as edited during Cooperating Agency meeting this morning. This display/on-screen version of the draft matrix includes suggested changes or considerations for changes to the alternatives

- **AIR**
  - Jeff O'Connell (BLM hydrologist): walked through preliminary draft alternatives matrix for air.
  - See suggested changes to alternatives matrix for air, soil, and water (edited 12/5/07).

- RAC Subcommittee comment: should an alternative consider striving for improving air quality beyond the requirements of the law? Perhaps this would include localized preventative monitoring.
- David Batts (EMPS): see Appendix C, page 2, which outlines required land use plan decisions for air, which is essentially to follow the law.
- Brian Hopkins (BLM): multiple things contribute to air quality, and only so much of that is within BLM's management control. In other programs (resource uses), such as fire, we can include actions or stipulations to mitigate air impacts from authorized activities on BLM-administered lands.
- RAC Subcommittee comment: why do we highlight only Class I airsheds? Are there other areas that should be considered? BLM response: we must protect Class I airsheds.

- **SOIL**
  - Jeff O'Connell (BLM hydrologist): walked through the preliminary draft alternatives matrix for soil.
    - COA = conditions of approval.
    - NSO = no surface occupancy. Generally means no long-term occupancy/disturbance. There are exceptions to this that will be added to the stipulation/restriction.
    - SSR = site-specific relocation. Covers things outside oil and gas.
    - CSU = controlled surface use. Generally means that there can be use and it might be moved around. There are exceptions to use that will be added to this stipulation/restriction.
    - HUC = hydrologic unit code.
    - General direction of current management is where BLM would propose to head with future management in the draft alternatives. There could be case-by-case basis minor changes to these broad-brush alternatives.
    - RAC Subcommittee question: regarding no ground disturbance on certain slopes, does that allow site-specific allowances for disturbance if the site is revegetated within two years, for example? BLM response: Alternative D considers case-by-case basis conditions of approval for site-specific projects. RAC Subcommittee feedback: Alternative D should include Alternative B action plus considering site-specific/case-by-case basis conditions of approval.
    - RAC Subcommittee question: are activities on BLM lands subject to requirements of state (for stormwater, for example), as well as BLM requirements? BLM response: activities on BLM lands are subject to state regulations/laws and BLM requirements. Permittee would need both approvals.
    - Need to move Alternative B Action items on page 2 of handout to current management; it is essentially what is written in the 1999 oil and gas EIS for GSFO.
  - RAC Subcommittee comment: are there themes for the alternatives, like one is more resource production focused, resource protection focused, etc.? BLM response: we will give the group more guidance on those themes at future meetings. Currently Alternative B is the big picture direction of where BLM may be heading.

- **WATER**
  - Jeff O'Connell (BLM hydrologist): walked through preliminary draft alternatives matrix for water.
  - Where there was one objective under current management, that has been broken out into three objectives. Basically there is an objective that addresses water quantity, one that addresses water quality, and one that addresses geomorphic balance.
  - RAC Subcommittee comment: should we consider actions to protect other streams in addition to those on the 303d list? BLM response: added some language to the 303d list action in alternatives matrix. In addition, there may be some direction under other resources/resource uses, such as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, that may offer additional protection (and would be compatible with water decisions).
  - RAC Subcommittee comment: regarding the first objective on page 6 of preliminary draft alternatives handout, what does BLM mean by "provide sufficient water quantity." BLM response: this also came up during Cooperating Agency meeting this morning; suggested

changes or considerations in the alternatives are captured in this matrix on the screen (which reflects suggestions made by Cooperating Agencies earlier today): need to change to "work to acquire" or "work to provide", etc.; and also need an action to identify what is sufficient.

- **AREAS OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN**
  - Carla DeYoung (BLM): gave overview of Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) report and which ACECs will be carried forward in the RMP range of alternatives.
  - See handout "Glenwood Springs and Kremmling Field Offices RMP Revision – Evaluation of Proposed Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (November 2007)." This report was just signed/completed. It does not include the Kremmling Field Office-specific information (for the sake of saving paper) but that information is available upon request.
  - See handout (Map) "ACEC Nominations in GSFO."
  - See handout (Map) "Recommended ACECs – 67,781 acres – Glenwood Springs Field Office."
  - FLPMA requires that BLM consider protection of ACECs during planning process. See pages 7 and 8 of the ACEC report for what is required for an area to qualify as an ACEC.
  - This report is not a decision document; it does not identify any particular management for any particular areas; it only specifies which areas do or do not meet the ACEC criteria. Areas must meet at least one of the relevance criteria and one of the importance criteria.
  - Received 90 nominations for ACECs during outreach/scoping process; 81 areas were from Colorado Natural Heritage Program, who had not narrowed down areas to BLM lands, etc. Seventeen areas met the criteria. Page 11 of report outlines potential ACECs. Shaded areas are those that met the importance and relevance criteria. All of these ACECs will be carried forward in at least one alternative in the RMP. Some alternatives could modify the size of each ACEC.
  - <u>If there are ACECs that RAC Subcommittee wants to include in no, one, some or all alternatives, email comments to Brian Hopkins at BLM.</u>

- **RECREATION**
  - Brian Hopkins (BLM recreation specialist): gave a PowerPoint presentation of Special Recreation Management Areas and Extensive Recreation Management Areas and how the RMP will designate these areas (slides 1-28 of presentation file).
  - Brian Hopkins presented existing SRMAs (Special Recreation Management Areas), existing RMAs (Recreation Management Areas), and potential new SRMAs and solicited group feedback. See handout "Existing and Potential GSFO Special Recreation Management Areas – Draft (12/5/07)."
    - See handout: Map of RMAs and SRMAs
    - See handout: Map of GSFO BLM SRMAs and Recreation Sites
    - RAC Subcommittee should review this table/matrix before next meeting and provide feedback at that time.
      - Eagle River SRMA: we do not know where this SRMA designation originated. RAC Subcommittee comment: Many of the areas along the Eagle River are becoming more important for rafting and fishing.
      - Gypsum Hills SRMA: identified as an SRMA previously mainly because the area has many routes and needed travel management. That is no longer a justification for creating an SRMA. Could the area be managed by travel management designations, or does it need to be an SRMA?
      - All the blue-shaded areas are next to user communities (not specifically a town or city). It would be important for those user communities to collaborate with BLM if they also want these areas designated; that collaboration would be considered when determining if they would be SRMAs.
      - Need to email map of existing SRMAs and RMAs with each area labeled.
    - RAC Subcommittee will review the SRMA table/matrix before the next meeting and we will discuss these in detail at the January 16, 2008, meeting.

OTHER ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

- None.

PUBLIC COMMENT/QUESTIONS

- None.

NEXT MEETING

- Next GSFO RAC Subcommittee meetings are scheduled as follows (all will be from 5:00pm – 8:00pm):
    - Wednesday, January 16, 2008

ACTION ITEMS

- For future meeting dates, see "Next Meeting" above.
- **Angie/Brian:** Provide RAC Subcommittee contact list to members.
- **Angie:** in preliminary draft alternatives matrix, soils section: move Alternative B Action items on page 2 to current management; it is essentially what is written in the 1999 oil and gas EIS for GSFO.
- **Brian Hopkins:** Email map of existing SRMAs and RMAs with each area labeled to RAC Subcommittee members.
- **Angie/Brian:** On next meeting agenda, RAC Subcommittee will discuss the SRMA table/matrix.

AMA – December 5, 2007