

**BLM District Resource Advisory Council Meeting
Meeting Minutes
June 1, 2011**

Super 8 Motel
Grangeville, Idaho

RAC Members in Attendance:

Category 1:

Douglas Boggan, David Brummer, Linda Rider, Kimberly Friend

Category 2:

Jackie McAvoy, Kimberly Brown, Jerry Shriner, Tom Crimmins

Category 3:

Randy Doman, Greg Taylor, Keegan Schmidt, Aaron Miles

BLM Staff in Attendance:

Gary Cooper – Designated Federal Official and Coeur d'Alene District Manager

Will Runnoe – Cottonwood Field Manager

Robbin Boyce – Assistant Field Manager

David Sisson - Archaeologist

Kurt Pavlat – Coeur d'Alene Field Manager

Suzanne Endsley – Public Affairs

Lisa Wagner – Acting RAC Coordinator and Budget Analyst

Larry Kaiser – Forester

Lonnie Newton – Fire Ecologist

Karen Hendren – Administrative Assistant - notetaker

Jeff Cartwright – Realty Specialist

Others in Attendance:

Mike Hanna – Senator Risch's Office

Mike Roach – Senator Risch's Office

Mitch Silvers – Senator Crapo's Office

Scott Carlton - Congressman Labrador's Office

Jim Chemelik – Idaho County Commissioner

Trish Callaghan – US Forest Service

Note to readers: A copy of each attachment listed in the txt of, or at the end of these minutes is on file with the official copy of minutes in the BLM Coeur d'Alene Office. Persons desiring to view attachments should contact Lisa Wagner at (208) 769-5014.

District Manager Gary Cooper welcomed attendees and the RAC. He introduced Suzanne Endsley, Public Affairs, who will be taking over as RAC Coordinator and he thanked Lisa Wagner for her outstanding job as the acting Coordinator.

The meeting was called to order.

Linda Rider, RAC Chairperson, briefed the council on her attendance at the RAC Chair meeting held in Boise in April. She and DFO Gary Cooper attended and learned about projects underway across the state. Some of the issues that were discussed during the session included how to get better representation and involvement. Some of the issues other RACs in the state are involved with include: grazing, travel management, and NEPA projects.

BLM State Director Steve Ellis encouraged the Chairs to get provide input to the new fuels reduction budget allocation process.

Several RAC members spoke about coordinating with the Boise RAC and improving communications with them.

Gary Cooper shared information about the RAC application and nomination process and that the National BLM Office is looking into improvements to the process.

Old Business

- Reviewed Agenda (Handout #1)
- Minutes of the previous meeting held March 22, 2011, were approved as motioned by Aaron Miles and seconded by Kim Friend.

New Business

Bug Slope ATV Area:

Cottonwood Field Manager Will Runnoe gave an update on the Bug Slope ATV issue that the RAC was briefed on during the March 2011 meeting. The site is 2.5 acres in size and is commonly called, Community Corrals. The site has been closed due to vandalism and the threat to archeological sites. The BLM has identified and conducted preliminary archeological surveys at a site adjacent to the Corrals.

A community-based committee, Idaho County Travel Management Committee, was formed to look at alternative sites. County Commissioner Jim Chmelick represented the Committee and presented a recommendation to the RAC. The Committee reviewed 5 potential sites, including the existing location. While the original location was considered to be the most popular, the proposed location by the BLM could also serve the public's needs well. Kent Rad, landowner, stated that the original site has historically been used for logging and farming and further use would not harm it. He feels the proposed site could have fire issues and it is part of a leased grazing allotment.

David Sisson, BLM Archeologist shared information about a test pit that found artifacts dating back 3000 years as well as a transportation system (tram) used in the 40's and 50's.

RAC members expressed concern about the site and it becoming vandalized, as many are along the river. They were also concerned about the historical values of the area as well as providing a site for younger ATV/motorcycle riders to use without damage occurring.

By moving the motorized use to this alternative site (#4), it would protect the artifacts and the historic use of the area. The area would be fenced off to prevent vehicles on the prior site. The RAC suggested educating the youth and others that use the site about the historical importance of the original corrals area.

RAC members stated the importance of public lands belonging to all but users being respectful of it.

Aaron Miles, RAC Tribal Representative, stated the importance of these types of areas to the Tribe. There are thousands of years of history and knowledge of these previous village locations and burial grounds are limited due to Tribal Elders that are passing away. Running dirt bikes over burial grounds desecrates the importance of them. It is important to protect these areas for our future generations.

RAC members stated that public lands belong to the public, including local and throughout the country, and should be managed for the long term. When we say "public", that includes the present use, but if there are archaeological and historic influences that remain, which the general public might be unaware of. Preservation and identification of archaeological and historic influences are also a part of the BLM's management guidelines for public lands.

Decision:

All were in favor of recommending the BLM to proceed with analysis and NEPA work on site #4 (Bug Slope ATV Site), the area that is adjacent to Community Corrals. The RAC also asked the BLM to proceed with the necessary environmental analysis required as expeditiously as possible.

Proposed Land Exchange BLM and Idaho Forest Group

Realty Specialist for the Cottonwood Field Office, Jeff Cartwright, presented an overview of the proposed land exchange of scattered, isolated parcels between the BLM and Idaho Forest Group, (formerly Bennett Lumber) in two phases. The proposal is in the initial stages and looks at 5,172 acres of BLM land and 2,542 acres of IFG holdings. An environmental assessment (EA) will be done and lands appraised to determine actual value. Value of exchanged parcels must be equal. One benefit to the exchange would allow better management and protection by the BLM for TES species. The action would be consistent with the Resource Management Plan (RMP) by continuing to build and expand ownership (BLM) along the Salmon River and disposing of isolated parcels that limit management.

Decision: *All were in favor of the BLM continuing this potential land exchange.*

Cottonwood Field Office Updates (Will Runnoe, Field Manager):

Conservation Easement with the Heckman Family: The Heckman family is currently working with the Cottonwood Field Office on a 475-acre conservation easement to the BLM. The land is along the Lower Salmon River stretching from Hammer Creek to Pine Bar. The Heckman's desire by transferring ownership of the land is to maintain the primitive nature of it versus having

it become subdivided with houses. The Field Office released an environmental assessment in late May and hope to close on the property transfer this fall. Don Heckman and family may consider an additional conservation easement to the BLM with another parcel of their land.

Lolo Creek permanent fish weir - a cooperative agreement with BPA and the Nez Perce Tribe proposes establishing a permanent fish weir in the creek which will better track the juveniles and the habitat of the fisheries.

Riggins Gun Range- Working with the community on options for the range. There are public concerns regarding hazmat issues.

Temporary Closure on Marshall Mtn- While completing the supplemental EIS regarding big horn sheep it was necessary to temporary close allotments on Marshall Mountain due to the decision being appealed.

Riggins Rodeo – Several incidents took place at BLM's Shorts Bar on the weekend of the rodeo which has caused the BLM to take action – specifically to issue a no alcohol rule for the campground.

Salmon River Working Group Fee Program, (Trish Callaghan & Patty Johnson, Forest Service) Shared information about projects that have been completed along the Salmon River with recreation fee receipts. Some of the things that have been implemented to manage the river are an electronic reservation system, bills associated with launches paid electronically and additional communication sites. An environmental assessment (EA) has been completed for improvements along the river. Projects include the Carey Creek boat launch, a new toilet and additional parking, a new design for Vinegar boat launch and upgrades to Spring Bar and Wind River trailhead.

The RAC would like to see accomplishment reports include how funds are allocated, how they are actually spent, and a prioritized list of planned work by fiscal year.

BLM Fuels Reduction Budget Model

Lonnie Newton presented an overview of the new BLM fuels funding system, Hazardous Fuels Priority and Allocation System (HFPAS). The system is planned to allocate \$82 million dollars to the field units by utilizing several models for prioritization.

EMDS is the Ecosystem Management Decision Support model that evaluates high priority areas relative to risk using historical wildfire incidences and associated consequences. TPS is the Treatment Prioritization System that evaluates how individual treatments satisfy the hazardous fuels program priorities.

Lonnie presented information on where the Coeur d'Alene and Cottonwood Field Offices would rank using these models and it could be at a potentially much lower funding level than previous year. There is concern because of the need to continue to treat coniferous fuels in the northern

Idaho area and be able to compete with units such as the Great Basin that have a very different fuel type.

Decision: *The RAC stressed concern about the new models and the effects it may have to Idaho. The group decided to write a formal letter stressing their concerns to the Secretary of Interior, Director Abbey and State Director Ellis. Randy Doman will make an initial effort writing the letter; Tom Crimmins and Jerry Shriner will review. Linda will sign and submit to the Secretary.*

Next Meeting: The RAC set Tuesday, September 13 as the next meeting date. They will plan to do a one-day meeting in Moscow at the Department of Labor office.

The RAC also discussed possibly moving the public forum timeframe to 11 am to possibly make it easier for the public to attend, assuming they could incorporate it into their lunch break.

Travel Closeout: Lisa handed out travel forms for folks to fill out that travelled to attend the meeting.

Meeting Adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

Minutes recorded by: Karen Hendren

Minutes prepared by: Suzanne Endsley, RAC Coordinator

Minutes approved by: Linda Rider

Date: 10/14/2011

Next Meetings:

September 13, Moscow, Idaho

Handouts:

1. Agenda
2. RAC Meeting Minutes from March 22, 2011
3. Letter to Commissioner Chemlick from Cottonwood Field Manager
4. Lower Salmon River ATV/Motorcycle Riding Area Exploration Committee Report
5. Accomplishment Report – 2011 Recreation Fee Program
6. Proposed Land Exchange – BLM/IFG
7. Lower Salmon River ACEC Acquisitions
8. DOI 2011 Hazardous Fuels Prioritization & Allocation System (HFPAS)
9. 2012 HFPAS Project Priority System Attribute
10. 2012 HFPAS Project Priority System Attributes