

**Coeur d'Alene Resource Advisory Council  
Meeting Minutes  
April 6 and 7, 2010**

**BLM Coeur d'Alene District Office, Idaho**

**RAC Members in Attendance:**

Category 1:

Doug Boggan, David Brummer, Alan Harper, Ron Hood, Linda Rider

Category 2:

Jerry Boggs, Tom Crimmins, Jackie McAvoy, Kimberly Brown, Jerry Shriner (4/7 only)

Category 3:

Randy Doman, Greg Taylor, James Kingery, Aaron Miles, Chris Goetz

**BLM Staff in Attendance:**

Gary Cooper – District Manager

Lisa Wagner – RAC Coordinator

Stephanie Snook – RAC Coordinator

William Runnoe – Cottonwood Field Manager

Robbin Boyce – Asst. Cottonwood Field Manager (4/7 only)

Kurt Pavlat – Acting Coeur d'Alene Field Manager

Cynthia Weston – Resource Coordinator

David Fortier – Environmental Engineer

Brian White – CdA Outdoor Recreation Planner (field trip only)

Kurt Pindel – CdA Fire Ecologist (field trip only)

**Other Attendees:**

Karen Roetter -Senator Crapo's CdA office

Sid Smith – Senator Risch's CdA office

*Note to readers: A copy of each attachment listed in the text 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 Stephanie Snook at (208) 769-5004.*

The meeting began at 8:05 a.m.

Opening Remarks

District Manager Gary Cooper welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the 2010 Coeur d'Alene District RAC. Introductions for all in attendance were made and RAC members were asked to provide their name, interest group they represent, number of years on the RAC, their expectation while serving on the RAC and one thing they want to know more about.

The agenda for this meeting was reviewed (Handout 1).  
Minutes of the May 11, 2009 meeting were reviewed (Handout 2).

Stephanie Snook provided an overview of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) as well as how the roles, responsibilities and functions of the RAC are defined and to be carried out.

### Conducting RAC Business

Lisa Wagner presented an overview of the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA). Discussion took place about how the Coeur d'Alene RAC functions under the FLREA to review both BLM and Forest Service recreation fee changes (new fee sites, increases and decreases in fees) as compared with other offices in Idaho and other states. For clarification purposes, and for the benefit of the new RAC members, the 15-member CdA RAC conducts business on a variety of issues. When it is time to discuss recreation fee issues, the BLM RAC adjourns and the same 15-members conduct business as the Recreation RAC.

The RAC Charter (Handout 3) was reviewed and items of particular interest were discussed in more detail including what constitutes a quorum; subgroups; recreation fee review and recommendations; and reaching consensus vs voting.

### RAC Roles and Responsibilities

Wagner and Snook lead a discussion with the RAC about the roles and responsibilities of the various positions:

- BLM Designated Federal Official (DFO) – The RAC reports to the DFO, the BLM District Manager Gary Cooper, who is responsible for managing the RAC. The DFO (or designee) must attend all RAC meetings; prioritize agenda; ensure good communication (minutes, follow-up and feedback); share expectations with the RAC; engage the RAC members in issues to help the BLM; and use a collaborative process to use the RAC's knowledge of the area and resources.
- BLM RAC Coordinator – Meeting logistics, RAC business and correspondence, nominations, database, and other support. Lisa Wagner has filled this role for the past two years and now Stephanie Snook will now resume her role as the RAC Coordinator.
- RAC Chair – works with the DFO and RAC Coordinator to establish meeting agenda items; runs the meetings ensuring everyone can or does provide input; calls meetings to order; maintains order; leads the group; keeps the Vice-Chair involved; recognize and allow introduction of guests or members of the public at meetings; facilitate the public comment process (sign in, name tags, time limits, discussion); approve minutes of meetings; assist the RAC Coordinator in providing orientation to new RAC members; manage follow-up items; interact with other RAC Chairs; signs letters that are provided to the DFO; work with any subgroups that are formed; and adjourn meetings.

- RAC Vice-Chair – Serves as a back-up to the Chair, provides orientation to new RAC members.
- RAC Members - Provide sound advice and recommendations on assigned issues/tasks; follow Robert's rules of order to reach consensus; attend meetings; participate in discussions, ask questions, represent your category of interest.

#### RAC Member Nominations

Snook discussed the RAC member nomination and appointment process and asked the RAC members for assistance finding nominees. There are four terms that will expire on September 20, 2010; two timber representatives, one arch/historical representative and one academia. May 10 is the deadline for nominations. The RAC discussed concerns about the nomination process taking so long and identified issues when new members have not been appointed and the RAC needs to conduct business. See Follow-up item at the end of these notes.

#### BLM Priorities & State RAC Chair Meeting

Gary Cooper briefly discussed the Idaho BLM state-wide priority list for 2010 (Handout 4) which was provided to the Idaho RAC Chairs during their meeting with the Idaho State Director in Boise on March 24, 2010. In addition to the 2010 priorities, the RAC Chairs discussed opportunities and challenges and each RAC Chair provided a brief update on actions and issues the RAC is/has worked on. Jerry Shriner attended the RAC Chair meeting in Boise on behalf of the Coeur d'Alene RAC.

#### Coeur d'Alene Field Office Updates — Kurt Pavlat

##### Fuel Reduction/Forest Health Projects

Several projects are in various stages of completion, all of which involve a great deal of collaboration and outreach. Objectives include improving forest health some of which include species conversion to restore forests to functional or historic (pre-European settlement) conditions that included fires; while considering climate change, localized changes and social values. Several projects will reduce Douglas fir and grand fir that are susceptible to root rot and later become fuels; replant with rust resistant western white pine and western large; and remove bug-killed lodgepole pine. Use of low intensity fires are planned to mimic wildfires; retaining the larger ponderosa pine component; reducing Douglas fir and grand fir; removing ladder fuels and allowing the sites to be more productive.

Wallace South Hill – This is Shoshone County's #1 project for reducing hazardous fuels. Expect about 2.5 million board feet of timber will be removed; includes helicopter logging.

Mullan South Hill – working on access.

Murray South – in the initial phases of this 400 ac. treatment area

#### Coeur d'Alene Basin Superfund Cleanup/ASARCO settlement – David Fortier

PowerPoint presentation (Handout 5) included a program overview of the Hazardous Materials Program (authorities, laws, regulations and partners) and activities involved in the Coeur d'Alene Basin Cleanup and Restoration. David gave a historical perspective of

actions within the 21-square mile Bunker Hill Superfund site, designated by the EPA in 1983. Lead, arsenic, cadmium and zinc were discharged into streams and rivers, extending through Lake Coeur d'Alene and into the Spokane River. The EPA developed a plan to clean up the contaminated area that will cost an estimated \$359 million over the next 30 years. The EPA is currently amending this plan. The BLM has been involved with site investigations and cleanup work, primarily in Pine Creek (near Pinehurst). The BLM has spent about \$7 million over the last 20 years at various sites; removing and stabilizing mine tailings, stream bank restoration, dust control and other remediation or restoration actions. A recent bankruptcy settlement involving ASARCO, resulted in the largest hazardous waste recovery cleanup settlement on record; \$1.79 billion for environmental cleanup and restoration. The BLM, as a member of the Federal Trustees, will continue to be involved in restoration and remediation work, which is expected to take 20-30 years, along with the Coeur d'Alene Tribe, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and U.S. Forest Service.

### **WORKING LUNCH**

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#### **Recovery Act Projects - Cindy Weston**

Cindy provided an overview of the projects funded through the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act totaling \$1,350,000 for our District. Many of these were identified by the BLM as deferred maintenance projects, unfunded projects that needed to be completed, while others were capital improvements. Handout 6 identifies the project, funding, and how the money has been spent. Three projects have been completed: Cottonwood office re-wiring, Cottonwood recreation site chip sealing parking lots; and the trail reclamation work near Crystal Lake. Other projects have been partially completed, such as the stream bank restoration work at the Huckleberry campground, Elk City hazardous fuels reduction project; and the remaining projects will be completed this summer/fall.

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#### **Public Comment Period (1:00pm-1:30pm) - No public attended.**

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Meeting adjourned at 1:30 followed by the RAC field trip.

**Field Trip** – for the remainder of the day, the RAC toured the following sites:

- **Blue Creek Bay** – location of a soon-to-be day use site that will include facilities for non-motorized boat launching, parking area, fishing dock, sidewalks, toilets, tables, grilles, etc.
- **Mineral Ridge Boat Launch** – This fee site was recently established after the Recreation RAC reviewed the fee site proposal. This is one of the locations used during the December Eagle Watch events.
- **Mineral Ridge Proposed Burn** – A 55-acre low intensity under burn is planned along the south side of Mineral Ridge in the fall of 2010 or 2011. The goal is to reintroduce fire to reduce the amount of ground and ladder fuels while protecting and retaining the large ponderosa pine trees. This would reduce the potential for a wildfire from occurring in this area and reduce the risk of damage to the recreation site and adjacent homes.

RAC tour ended at 3:45 p.m.

**April 7, 2010** (All RAC Members, BLM staff and other Attendees also present)

Election - RAC Chair and Vice-Chair

Nominations were opened seeking three nominations per position. Jerry Shriner, Linda Rider and Tom Crimmins were nominated.

*McAvoy moved to close nominations; second by Harper.* Members voted by closed ballot resulting in a tie between Shriner and Rider for the Chair position. Members again voted by closed ballot and Linda Rider was chosen as Chair and Jerry Shriner as Vice-Chair.

Rider assumed position as Chair and conducted the remainder of the meeting.

*Goetz moved to have the RAC Vice-Chair become the Recreation RAC Chair when the Recreation RAC is in session; second by Crimmins. Motion carried.* This will assist in differentiating when the Recreation RAC is in session since the same members are involved.

Meeting Minutes

Minutes from the previous meeting were reviewed.

*Brown moved to approve the minutes, seconded; Motion carried.*

In the future, meeting minutes will be approved by the RAC Chair; posted to the internet, then reviewed and corrected, if necessary, at the next meeting.

M3 Proposed Land Exchange – Kurt Pavlat

Pavlat provided a brief power point presentation showing maps (provided by M3) delineating parcels of private and BLM land that M3 Eagle LLC is proposing for a land exchange. M3 proposes trading 11,838 acres of their private land (south of Horseshoe Bend) to the BLM (Boise District) in exchange for one parcel of BLM land totaling 815 acres along Highway 16 northeast of Star, ID. Since the values in this trade would not be equal, M3 also proposes that about 8,000 acres of BLM land in northern Idaho be traded to M3 and they would then sell the northern Idaho parcels, mostly small and scattered parcels, to the Idaho Forest Group.

The proposed exchange would result in:

BLM transferring about 8815 acres of public land to M3;

BLM acquiring 11,838 acres from M3;

M3 retaining 815 acres from BLM; and

IFG buying about 8,000 acres from M3

The 815 acre parcel that M3 wants to acquire is not available for disposal in the BLM land use plan so there may be an effort to introduce and pass legislation to complete this land exchange. M3 may have submitted previous proposals to acquire the 815 acre parcel and were denied. The 8,000+ acres of BLM land in northern Idaho represent a

majority of the lands that were not included in a “retention” category when the Coeur d'Alene Resource Management Plan (RMP) was completed in 2007. If these acres are transferred to M3, and ultimately sold to the IFG, the BLM in northern Idaho would have no “trading stock” when local land exchange opportunities are presented.

This presentation generated a lot of discussion and several questions were asked about the legislated land exchange process and the likelihood that such legislation would be introduced and passed. Sid Smith from Senator Risch's Coeur d'Alene Office indicated that the Senator's office has been briefed but that he knew no details about the exchange or proposed legislation. Karen Roetter from Senator Crapo's Coeur d'Alene Office indicated that the proposal has reached only the highest level, Chief of Staff, in Senator Crapo's Office. Other questions about land values; errors on the maps; public input process; public benefits of acquiring the 11,838 ac. parcel owned by M3; proposed uses of the 815 acre parcel; and what IFG would do with the parcels from BLM were asked. Pavlat indicated that this exchange is still in the preliminary stages so no appraisals have been completed. Errors on the maps can be corrected at a later time as the BLM does not have the staff or time to work on this exchange concept at this time. This is an unplanned workload and other projects would be delayed if the BLM were to review this exchange in detail. If funding or contractors were used to gather information, the BLM staff would still need to devote time and effort to write, review, and oversee this process. This exchange originated through the Boise office and the Coeur d'Alene District has not had a formal presentation from M3. The Realty Specialist in Boise is the lead for this exchange.

Boggan suggested the RAC write a letter asking for transparency in this process.

*Shriner moved to appoint a subgroup to study all available information and report back to the RAC; Harper seconded.*

*Discussion:*

*Brown would like to see the process slowed down so the public has a voice and can be well served. Crimmins would also like to see the normal exchange process be followed (with NEPA, etc.).*

*An amendment/addition to the previous motion was made by Crimmins, and seconded by Brown to read: The RAC is opposed to the legislative exchange and would like to have the exchange follow the normal land exchange process including NEPA, public participation and transparency, prior to a decision. Motion carried.*

A subgroup was then formed to draft a letter to the DFO regarding this issue. A draft of the letter will be sent to all the RAC members for review prior to signature by the RAC Chair:

- Jerry Shriner – Category 2 (lead)
- Jerry Boggs – Category 2
- David Brummer – Category 1
- Greg Taylor – Category 3

Reports/Updates – Cottonwood Field Office

- Resource Management Plan – The Record of Decision was signed in December 2009 and made available for the public. This was a five-year collaborative effort. Alternative B is the environmentally preferred alternative. We received and addressed five protests regarding domestic sheep grazing in bighorn sheep habitat. A Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement has been initiated to address this issue on four BLM grazing allotments in the Lower Salmon River canyon. Travel management decisions were included in the RMP process due to the small acreage, scattered ownership. We are now in the process of identifying trails, roads and completing the inventory and assessment.
- Bighorn Sheep Monitoring – pneumonia may be transferred from domestic sheep to bighorn sheep and there is no vaccination for domestic sheep (believed to be the carriers). A native population of bighorn sheep resides in the Salmon River Canyon near Riggins. Both the BLM and Forest Service are involved with this issue. We are waiting for the Payette Forest's EIS and plan to address this issue. Monitoring by Idaho Fish and Game, the Nez Perce Tribe and the BLM continues. Bighorn sheep provide subsistence, clothing, regalia, and tools to members of the Nez Perce Tribe. The grazing permittee can still graze sheep on his private land that is within the bighorn sheep range.
- Craig Mountain Partnership – Idaho Fish and Game, Idaho Department of Lands (IDL), the Nez Perce Tribe and the BLM are partners in managing this area; forest, range, weeds, oil and gas, and fire rehab efforts are ongoing. IDL is focused on forest thinning, prescribed burns and bark beetle issues.
- Land and Minerals Actions –
  - Marshall Mountain (upper Salmon River drainage) - Bear Lake Mining is conducting exploration work adjacent to the Marshall Mountain Wilderness Study Area.
  - Buffalo Gulch Mine near Elk City – gold mining was initiated in 1990; received request from mining company in 2006 to approve additional work under the old permit. This was denied and determined an EIS would be needed. The company sought financial backers and no action has been taken but rehab work from previous mining still needs to be completed. A decision was recently issued requiring restoration work be completed.
  - Lochsa Land Exchange – This is primarily a Forest Service exchange to acquire land in the Lolo Creek drainage. It may include a proposal to transfer an 80 acre parcel of BLM land with Forest Service buildings on it to the FS.
  - Elk City parcel of BLM land, part of the old Bennett Forest Industries mill site (now Idaho Forest Group) has been leased to Idaho County. Propose to sell a parcel of BLM to Idaho County or IFG.
  - Potential land acquisitions – Salmon River land or easement is being considered.

- Forest Health/Fuels – Cottonwood Field Office  
Robbin Boyce, Assistant Field Manager, provided an overview of several forest health and fuel reduction projects in their area including the ARRA funded Sweeney Hill project that is employing six to seven people in the Elk City area.
- Wild and Scenic River – The Cottonwood Resource Management Plan identified all 112 miles of Lower Salmon River as eligible and suitable for designation under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. The area from the Middle Fork of the Salmon River downstream through the Frank Chuck River of No Return Wilderness Area is designed as wild. There is currently a proposal by Idaho Rivers United, with support from Congressman Minnick's office to designate the 112 mile stretch from Vinegar Creek (near Riggins) to the confluence with the Snake River. After designation, a management plan would be developed which could change current uses. Designation may attract more people which may necessitate changes and/or more restrictions. This is a contentious issue and people seem to be choosing sides; either as proponents for designation or those who are opposed to it.

Due to limited time, this topic will be added to the agenda for the next meeting.

Kim Brown addressed the RAC and provided copies (Handout 7) of a publication listing events taking place during the month of May, Idaho Archaeology and Historic Preservation Month. She noted that several locations and presentations involve the BLM but none in our area. Brown also spoke about the Mullan Road, an important historic feature within the area that traverses public as well as private land. As the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this engineering feat approaches, she stressed the importance of preserving this historic route as well as providing public education activities. She offered to assist the BLM in nominating segments of the road on public land to the National Register of Historic Places.

Follow-up items:

As a result of the discussion about RAC nominations (4/6/2010) and the gap in time between the nominations and appointments; find out what constitutes a quorum between the time when the RAC appointments expire and before new appointments are made. Can the RAC conduct business before the new appointments are made? If there are two vacancies in a Category/Interest Group, and three members remain, is a quorum a majority of the three remaining? Assigned to: Stephanie Snook

**Next Meeting**

June 21 and 22, 2010 in Cottonwood

**Meeting Adjourned at 2:45 pm.**

Minutes recorded by: Stephanie Snook, RAC Coordinator

Minutes approved by: /s/ Linda Rider, Chair

Date: 5/24/2010

Handouts:

1. Agenda
2. RAC Meeting Minutes from May 11, 2009
3. Coeur d'Alene District RAC Charter
4. Idaho BLM Statewide Priorities 2010
5. Slides from Fortier PowerPoint Presentation on Coeur d'Alene Basin
6. CdA District ARRA Project Update
7. Idaho Archaeology and Historic Preservation Month, May 2010

**EXPECTATIONS of RAC members**

See collaborative process move forward (ID BLM and CdA District)

Assist the BLM as Native American Representative

Good discussions; common sense decisions

Improve communication at meetings and follow-up

Improve communication to public regarding archaeological/historical cabins (FS) and use fees for interpretation

More timber topics/program information

Interact with other groups represented

Know more about interaction with BLM outside the RAC meetings

Ask RAC for feedback

Help move forward – use of the RAC in transportation planning

BLM processes (fees, exchanges, minerals)

Better communication amongst agencies

Take Jim [Kingery] seriously

Help wherever possible

**THINGS THE RAC MEMBERS WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT**

Timber Program

Decision Making and Implementation

Transportation Planning

Fees and fee structure

Land exchange re: mining claims, etc.

Collaborative process BLM uses

*Coeur d'Alene District RAC Meeting  
April 6-7, 2010*

What BLM does

Land Management

Restoration, fish, culverts, etc.

Blue Creek Bay update (provided on April 6 at field trip)

Feedback/follow-up on recommendations

Future plans of OHV

How bighorn sheep interact with domestic sheep