

**BLM District Resource Advisory Council Meeting
Meeting Minutes
March 22, 2011**

BLM Coeur d'Alene District Office
3815 Schreiber Way
Coeur d'Alene, Idaho

RAC Members in Attendance:

Category 1:

Douglas Boggan, David Brummer, Linda Rider

Category 2:

Jackie McAvoy, Kimberly Brown, Jerry Shriner

Category 3:

Randy Doman, Greg Taylor, Keegan Schmidt, Chris Goetz

BLM Staff in Attendance:

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

Will Runnoe – Cottonwood Field Manager

Kurt Pavlat – Coeur d'Alene Field Manager

Diane Martin – Acting Coeur d'Alene Assistant Field Manager

Lisa Wagner – Acting RAC Coordinator and Budget Analyst

LeAnn Abell – Botanist

Desiree Struble – Administrative Assistant - notetaker

Others in Attendance:

Karen Roetter – Representative – Senator Crapo's Office

Aaron Calkins, Regional Director – Representative – Congressman Labrador's Office

Sid Smith – Representative – Senator Risch's Office

Kent Wellner – Recreation Specialist – Forest Service/IPNF

Claire Pitner - Recreation Planner - Coeur d'Alene River District

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.

The meeting began at 8:15 a.m.

Opening Remarks

Linda Rider – RAC Chair called the meeting to order

Introductions – RAC Members, BLM Staff, Guests

Old Business

Reviewed Agenda (Handout #1)

Reviewed and approved Minutes of the June 21, 2010 (since there wasn't a quorum at the last meeting) and September 14, 2010 meeting (Handout #2)

New Business

RAC Nomination Open Period

After going over the agenda for the day Lisa talked about the RAC Nomination period that is currently open. The following terms will be expiring at the end of September:

Doug Boggan - Grazing - Category 1
Ron Hood - Off-Highway Vehicles - Category 1
Jerry Boggs - Environmental - Category 2
Greg Taylor - State Agency - Category 3
Aaron Miles - Tribal Representative - Category 3

Folks were encouraged to reapply. Nominations are due to Lisa by May 2. Gary asked that folks help spread the word to generate interest in the BLM RAC.

RAC Charter

Lisa walked through the new Charter (Handout #3), which is good for the next two years. Lisa also handed out a sheet with a list of Roles and Responsibilities (Handout #4) developed by the RAC last year.

Miscellaneous Handouts

Lisa gave each member a copy of the FY2010 Annual Report (Handout #5) which highlights Idaho's accomplishments last fiscal year and the current RAC directory (Handout #6).

Kim Brown gave everyone a copy of the latest Museum of North Idaho newsletter (Handout #7). The newsletters focus was an article written by Kim about Blue Creek Bay.

M3 Land Exchange

Gary gave an update on the proposed M3 land exchange. A letter (Handout #8) was sent to M3 from the BLM on March 4. The letter explained that after a thorough assessment by the Coeur d'Alene and Boise Districts it was determined that the proposed exchange was not in the public's best interest at this time due to a number of reasons. It was also noted that other major exchanges will not be entertained until the Boise's Four Rivers Field Office is finished with their Resource Management Plan which is expected to be completed in 2013.

Secretarial Order 3308 - Management of the National Landscape Conservation System

Gary explained what Secretarial Order 3308 entailed. The RAC received a copy of the Order (Handout #9) along with an Organization Chart (Handout #10) and document with information about the National Landscape Conservation System (Handout #11). Gary explained that the Order was basically an organizational change to establish a new directorate.

Secretarial Order 3310 - Protecting Wilderness Characteristics on Lands Managed by the Bureau of Land Management

This Order is also referred to as the Wild Lands Policy. The RAC received a copy of the Order (Handout #12) as well as a BLM Fact Sheet (Handout #13). Gary explained that the policy is intended to reaffirm wilderness inventories and designate wilderness areas Congress would make decisions on. As far as the Coeur d'Alene District is concerned our Land Use Plans are in conformance with this new policy. We will need to identify wilderness characteristics for any newly acquired land. This process would be open with public involvement.

Randy asked if these lands could be included in a land exchange. Gary said they could be considered by would have to go through a public process first.

Kim asked if we have Wilderness Lands. Kurt Pavlat stated what areas were Wilderness Study Areas (3 areas in Coeur d'Alene and 3 areas in Cottonwood), but not currently designated as Wilderness (Congress would have to do that).

Miscellaneous Comments

Randy asked about the RAC's input into the Salmon River Work Group. Doug added that the Forest Service had agreed to report back to this group. Kim requested communication from the Forest Service. Lisa said she would follow-up and report back.

Since the meeting, Lisa spoke with Trish Callaghan at the Salmon- Challis National Forest for an update on the Salmon River Working Group. Trish sent a link to the Forest Service website where the Annual Report which shows the projects that was funded with fees. She stated the same basic formula for allocating fees is basically the same as was established by the group at the meeting held in Missoula in June of 2007. Trish is ready to get the Working Group back together again and will work to make that happen.

Cottonwood Field Office Briefing

Cottonwood Field Manager Will Runnoe gave an update on various issues currently going on in the Field Office.

Decision on Marshall Mtn allotment (Handout #14):

Gave historical perspective on issues with disease transmission between domestic and bighorn sheep. Cottonwood Field Office has three allotments that are up for consideration of closure due to this issue. We are analyzing the decision by the Payette National Forest and have closed Marshall Mountain. Looking at two others and hope to make a decision by 2012/2013.

Linda Rider asked what the affects will be to the land if the sheep don't graze. Will didn't see any impact on the land.

Doug Boggan asked what happens when Big Horn sheep come on private land where domestic sheep graze. Will said that some land owners are considering grazing cattle. Doug said that a family doesn't just lose their livelihood, but a community loses an identity.

Kim Brown asked what the effects on Big Horn sheep are. Will stated there was a 60% reduction of Big Horn sheep when exposed to domestic sheep.

Will stated that if the Payette decision is appealed then we will have to make adjustments. We used the best information in making our decision.

Bug Slope Summary (Handout #15):

An archeological site on 2 ½ acres near the Salmon River. On the National Register of historic places.

ATV use has damaged this site. In 1997 the area was closed by emergency order. Posted signs were torn down; junk cars were left; holes dug. This site was officially closed with the completion of the Resource Management Plan. Area was fenced off.

There will be a meeting this Friday to form a committee to look at alternative sites for ATVs.

Kim Brown asked if Will will have support at this meeting. Will responded that this meeting was with County Commissioners to form the group.

Linda Rider asked if Will could use RAC support.

Chris Goetz asked what surrounds the 2 ½ acres. Will said that more public land that is open to ATV use.

Gary said that RAC members could attend if they so chose - could be of great service.

Kim Brown suggested that Tom Crimmins attend the meeting on Friday. Randy Doman suggested that Kim Friend attend as well. Since Kim and Tom were not present, Chris Goetz and Doug Boggan volunteered to attend.

Kim Brown stressed the need to protect the 2 ½ acres.

Wild Horse & Burro's (Handout #16):

Will gave an update on the Wild Horse & Burro program. He talked about the Secretary's Initiative of creating a cost-efficient and sustainable program and overtime reducing the number of Wild Horses gathered.

Kim Brown commented that the cost of this program to the tax payer is too much.

Jackie McAvoy commented that the public is uninformed about the cost of care and maintenance for the animals once adopted. Kim Brown responded that it isn't the cost of care after adoption it's the impact and ability to sustain these animals on public lands.

Forest Service Recreation Program Update (Kent Wellner)

Kent introduced Claire Pitner from the Coeur d'Alene River District who would be giving the update on the Shoshone and Avery Cabins.

Avery Cabin was under contract and will be finished mid to late summer of this year. They expect it will be ready for rental in 2012.

Shoshone Cabin has a contract to do electrical and plumbing work this summer. They expect it will be ready for rental in 2013.

Kim Brown asked about historical signage at both cabins. Kim's wants to be sure the public knows about the cultural resources in and surrounding the cabins, in order for the public to have a better appreciation. Kim has mentioned this need in the past and wants to make sure it happens. Kent and Claire agreed with the need for signage and added that booklet is planned that will off information as well.

Election of Officers

Chris Goetz moved to nominate Linda Rider as Chairman and Jerry Shriner as Vice Chairman for another year.

David Brummer seconded.
Doug moved to vote.
Jackie McAvoy seconded.
All in Favor.

RAC Chairman - Linda Rider
RAC Vice Chairman - Jerry Shriner

Elections closed.

Coeur d'Alene Field Office Update (Kurt Pavlat)

Kurt Pavlat introduced himself as well as presenters Diane Martin, Acting Assistant Field Manager and LeAnn Abell, Botanist. Kurt gave presentation on Non-Renewable programs (Handout #17); Diane gave her presentation on Renewable Programs (Handout #18) in the field office and LeAnn gave a presentation on sensitive plant species (Handout #19).

McEuen Park

- BLM is indirectly involved due to the 3rd St boat ramp.
- Boat launches at Blackwell and Mineral Ridge are already maxed out.
- BLM is taking a neutral stance, but will cooperate with the best interest of the public.
- BLM states that there should be a 3rd street boat ramp replacement.

Wallace Forest Conservation Area (Blue Creek Bay)

- Completed day use area (Phase 1) of the new recreation site.
- New trailhead this summer (Phase 2)
- New eastside trail system with interpretive signage will be next (Phase 3)
- Phase 4 will follow with wildlife viewing area trail
- Historic Mullan Trail will be protected and interpreted

Jerry Shriner asked how long the trail is and if it will be open to horse use. Kim Brown and Linda Rider believe that the area is good for horse use already. LeAnn Abell said there are horse trails in that area already.

Cougar Bay

- In the process of acquiring an easement from Hagadone to the John Pointner Memorial Wildlife Sanctuary parcel.
- Collaborating with The Nature Conservancy.
- Public Scoping meeting will be held this fall.
- Access road requires the easement from Hagadone.
- Reduced funding and staff to maintain this and future recreation sites is of great concern.
- Gary said that our top priority is to maintain what we have. New sites will be a lower priority.

Peak Adventures

- One season Special Recreation Permit (SRP) has been appealed to the IBLA.
- BLM's response to the Statement of Reason is due to IBLA by April 12.
- Resource Management Plan conformance issues
- Significant impacts regarding cultural resources and potential wolverine denning habitat.
- There were violations of special stipulations this winter.
- SRP ends April 5.

Gold Mountain Communications Site

- Bonner County priority for emergency mgmt communications
- County has re-submitted a plan with less of a footprint.
- NEPA is expected to be completed this year.

State/BLM Exchange Concept

- Idaho Dept of Lands (IDL) wants to exchange 72 acres around Fernan Lake and 640 acres at Little Sand Creek.
- IDL is interested in exchanging a parcel south of Kootenai Wildlife Refuge.
- A meeting will be held on March 28 with the three IDL Area Managers to discuss the concept.

Linda Rider asked who manages the Kootenai Wildlife Refuge. Kurt said it is managed by the Fish & Wildlife Service.

Budget/Personnel Issues

- As of April 1, the Field Office Table of Organization will be reduced down to 13 permanent-fulltime (PFT) employees from the 19 that we had a year ago.
- Two PFT's shifted from the Field Office to the District.
- Actual losses in positions include the following: Forester; Fuels Tech; Natural Resource Specialist, Environmental Engineer; AFM-Term; and Hydrologist.

Gary Cooper informed the RAC how the budget fuels priorities are determined. The model being used to allocate money is now being used for all agencies across the board. The RAC decided to take on this issue of Fuels funding distribution. This will be an agenda item for the next meeting to take a closer look at the model.

RAC Chair Meeting Prep

Chairman Linda Rider will be attending a RAC Chair meeting in Boise on April 6. The group brainstormed ideas for her to take to the meeting to share during her time on the agenda.

Ideas:

RAC Chair Boise Meeting should be longer in order to have time to get into detail.

Disjointed communication between RACs when more than one is involved (example: M3 Exchange)

Improve communication, be transparent

Use RAC; Put the group to work

Ask other RAC Chair's if there is interest of exchanging meeting notes.

Bring into issues before decisions have been made. Use the RAC as advisors as intended.

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

Meeting Adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

Minutes recorded by: Desiree Struble

Minutes prepared by: Lisa Wagner, RAC Coordinator

Minutes approved by: Linda Rider, RAC Chair

Date: 06/01/11

Next Meetings:

June 1, Grangeville

September 13, Coeur d'Alene or Moscow

Handouts:

1. Agenda
2. RAC Meeting Minutes from September 14, 2010
3. Coeur d'Alene RAC Charter - 2011
4. RAC Roles and Responsibilities
5. FY 2010 Annual Report - Idaho BLM
6. Current Coeur d'Alene RAC Directory
7. Museum of North Idaho Newsletter
8. Letter addressed to M3 Companies from the BLM - 03/04/11
9. Secretarial Order No. 3308
10. BLM Table of Organization
11. National Landscape Conservation System information document
12. Secretarial Order No. 3310
13. America's Wild Lands BLM Fact Sheet
14. Marshall Mountain Final Decision
15. Bug Slope Summary
16. Caring for America's Wild Horses and Burros
17. Coeur d'Alene Field Office Non-Renewable PowerPoint
18. Coeur d'Alene Field Office Renewable PowerPoint
19. Coeur d'Alene District Rare Plants and Monitoring Efforts PowerPoint