

RAC Meeting Minutes  
February 9<sup>th</sup> 2005

**ATTENDANCE**

RAC Members: Tom Faulkner, Mike Tylka, Debbie Dane, Joe Tugaw, Yvette Tuell, Bud Bedke, Kelly Adams, Mel Quale, Travis Thompson, Scott Boettger, Jake Zollinger, Ken Sanders.

BLM: Howard Hedrick, Andy Payne, Chris Simonson, Bill Baker, Zach Oper, Sky Buffat, Eric Limbach, Rance Marquez, Ricke Vander Voet, Wendy Reynolds, Beckie Wagoner.

RAC training for new members was held from 7:00 am until 9:30 am. Ken Sanders was the training instructor.

10:00 the meeting was called to order by Kelly Adams, president of the RAC team, with welcomes and introductions following.

The first order of business was approving the previous meeting min.

**CRATERS**

Mel Quale, Chair of Craters Sub committee, then addressed the RAC. He went over the letter they put together to represent the RAC's decision on the Craters plan.

Debbie talked about SCITRDA and how they supported the project.

It was addressed if SCITRDA would like to add to the letter showing their support. The decision was made by majority vote that the RAC would stand on its own letter without endorsements.

Rick Vander Voet then went over the new book status for the Proposed Craters of the Moon National Monument and Preserve - Resource Management Plan. He also covered the "proposed" zones for the Monument.

Mel informed the group that all emails and correspondence on the issue would go into the official file, if anyone would like to remove their comments/suggestions they needed to let him know today.

Kelly then opened the floor for discussion/comments on the proposed letter.

Tom proposed the letter be submitted as it stood, Mike 2<sup>nd</sup>, and the motion was passed to submit the letter as it stood.

**TRIBAL PRESENTATION**

Yvette gave a presentation on the history and beliefs of the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes: their legends, values, and the importance of the Snake River and the preservation of nature.

Treaties with the government were also covered, which gave them unrestricted access with no boundaries for hunting, fishing and gathering.

The tribal goals are to protect the environment and wildlife, and to work towards reestablishing the resources by restoring the lands naturally, and also keeping their

customs alive. The tribe has been working with several agencies to better the wildlife habitats.

### **JARBIDGE**

Bill covered the current litigation between Dupont/BLM.

~issued EA-RCI 6 perm/7 allotments

~will issued proposed decisions on 2 in approx. 2 weeks

~of the other 4, one was granted the others denied

The current EA's:

~Wildhorse heard increases which should have a decision in May.

~Crested Wheat Grass vs proposed decision, should be issued Aug-Sept.

### **SAGE GROUSE**

John Augsburger, wildlife biologist from the Idaho state office, discussed:

~effects on the annual work plan.

~the decision that was made NOT to list the species as endangered, which has already caused a notice to sue.

~the 3 primary activities:

\*Revise Idaho Sage Grouse Conservation Plan

\*Finish the State Plan – top issues are: fire, inactive species, infrastructure, and livestock grazing. National Strategy – particularly the guidance for management of sage grouse plant communities.

\*State Strategy/Conservation Plan – cover, when, how

Jim Klott, Jarbidge Field Office wildlife biologist, went over the 2002 Plan

Key issues for our area:

~North – prime burnt

~Fencing – wet lands

First part of the plan covers Fire: It's the biggest threat and first priority, they are working on changing response times, and more places to respond from.

Second part is Public Education: Posting signs, prescribed burns only on low risk fire days.

Third part is Restoration: Restoring the habitat and wet meadows.

Elena Shaw, Twin Falls District Resource Coordinator, covered the history of the local (Shoshone-Basin) Sage Grouse working group.

Rich, local Sage Grouse working group, then gave some stats on the area they cover.

-180,400 acres

-51% BLM, 45% private, 4% state owned, 1 % USFS.

-group was formed in 1994 and included representatives from several areas.

~BLM

~Dept Lands

~Fish & Game

- ~NRCS
- ~Land owners/grazing perm
- ~hunting reps

-the main objective of the group is to manage and riparian vegetation and provide shelter for the sage grouse naturally.

-projects accomplished thus far include:

- ~installed pipelines/troughs, implementing utilization levels compatible with the sage grouse.
- ~have created 3 riparian pastures
- ~no grazing on 200 acres
- ~Dixie Harrow - rejuvenated 300 acres of old sagebrush with depleted under story
- ~maintained conservative hunting seasons.
- ~restoration of 600 acres

### **FMDA**

Tom Faulkner, sub-committee chair, went over the meeting they had that included:

- \*Monitoring-how it is frequently cut from the budget. The RAC team decided to recommend monitoring.
- \*Use of native grasses-RAC would like to use more stable grasses that would establish quicker in certain cases.
- \*Livestock grazing-RAC suggests a change of the grazing terms from min of 2 years changed to "site specific."

Alternative D: RAC does not have enough support to recommend Alternative D at this time but would like their comments considered.

Scott Boettger, asked about the relocation of the Hailey Airport, and suggested that RAC be involved in the decision. Next meeting on the airport will be Feb 22<sup>nd</sup> at 5:30 in Hailey. A sub-committee was formed of: Scott, Jake, and Debbie.

### **SNAILS:**

Howard, TFDO Manager, went over the current EA's on grazing in the Jarbidge and Boise District; BLM is looking for feedback from the RAC on these issues:

- ~snail protection
- ~grazing
- ~sanitation

Snail sub-committee was formed: Travis, Kelly, and Dennis.

### **SAGEBRUSH/JUNIPER EXPANSION:**

Wendy, Burley FO Manager, went over the background of the sagebrush/juniper expansion.

Rance, TFD Acting Operations Manager, then gave some history on the lands.

~sagebrush once occupied 110 million acres

~losses are due to: 50 million acres/ 45% was lost this way

\*Agriculture

\*Urbanization

\*Perennial grass conversion

\*Chet grass

\*Juniper encroachment

~Primary change is due to fire

\*it's not always the best way due to:

-safety

-control

-other things get burnt in the process

Juniper is NOT a weed, it provides habitat for many species and expands on its own.

Juniper communities are forever changing because of this.

### **CLOSING**

Kelly did a quick wrap and opened the floor for comments.

Next meeting is May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2005

Then Aug 9<sup>th</sup>, 2005