

Minutes
New Mexico Recreation Enhancement Act (REA)
Resource Advisory Council (RAC) Meeting
July 24, 2007

1. A meeting of the REA RAC was convened at the Pecos River Village Conference Center in Carlsbad at 8 a.m. The agenda items are shown in attachment 1.

2. Attendees
 - a. REA RAC members: Gerald Chacon, Bill Chavez, Matt Ferguson, Bruce Gantner, Betty Haagenstad, Rachel Jankowitz, Cliff Larsen, Mark Marley, Bob Ricklefs, Lynda Sanchez, William Sapien, Lynne Sebastian, Joanne Spivack.
 - b. BLM personnel: Eddie Bateson, Brian Bellew, Doug Burger, Sam DesGeorges, Dave Evans, Joel Farrell, Rosemary Herrell, Tony Herrell, Theresa Herrera, William Merhege, John Merino, Dorothy Morgan, Tom Phillips, Linda Rundell, Tim Sanders, James Sippel, Jim Stovall, Hans Stuart.
 - c. US Forest Service (USFS) personnel: Alan Koss, Jeff Saari.

3. Action on agenda items:
 - a. Federal Official Linda Rundell called the meeting to order and introduced Designated State Official Bryan Arrandt. She updated the RAC on topics including Snowy River Cave; wilderness areas being proposed by Congressman Udall and Senator Bingaman; progress on illegal dumping; and O&G development in the Galisteo Basin. She welcomed USFS visitors.

 - b. Jeff Saari gave an overview of acreage within NM designated by Congress to have a significant recreational component, including NCAs, wilderness areas, national monuments, wild and scenic rivers. BLM has 24 agency operated fee sites and USFS has 93, plus sites operated by concessions. Jeff explained the role of the RAC, and how fees are applied.

A RAC member asked whether lower fees for low-income families had been considered. The USFS includes those considerations when doing a business plan, for example, offering passes to local agencies, or having free days.

 - c. It was reiterated for new members that the NM RAC decided it would attempt to take part as a whole in REA activities and see whether that was effective. If it became too big a workload, they would establish an REA working group.

 - d. Proposed fee increases for Las Cruces area. BLM outdoor recreation planner Tom Phillips described Las Cruces area's three sites and their amenities. Aguirre Springs has the only high country campground in the Las Cruces, El Paso, Juarez area. Current fee structure \$3/day for camping. Proposed fee structure \$5/vehicle/day.

Dripping Springs Natural Area, with visitors' center, 20 individual picnic sites and one group site. Current fee structure \$3/vehicle/day. Proposed fee structure \$5/vehicle/day.

Three Rivers Petroglyph Site, with six sheltered picnic areas and one group picnic area. Current fee structure \$2/vehicle day use and camping, \$10/RV hookup. Proposed fee structure \$5/vehicle/day use and camping, \$15/RV hookup.

All proposals were discussed by REA RAC members. However, BLMNM proposals cannot be put forward for approval until a plan is established.

e. Proposed fee increases for Albuquerque area. Brian Bellew, acting assistant field manager, Rio Puerco FO, updated the RAC on Tent Rocks, which is unique for its intergovernmental ownership. Day-to-day operations are in the hands of Cochiti Pueblo.

f. Lake Roberts Campgrounds in the Gila National Forest were described by Alan Koss. The Lake Roberts recreation area is heavily used, with boat launches, picnic tables, campgrounds, fishing and boating, bird watching, and hiking trails.

The USFS wanted fees to be consistent with other USFS campgrounds and did not want to price lower-income users out. They provided good opportunities for low-income families through: no charge for day use; and no-fee areas for dispersed camping nearby.

Mesa & Upper End Campgrounds: Current fee structure \$7/night. Proposed fee structure \$15 with hookup, \$10 without hookup and \$3/additional vehicle. The RAC addressed the two campgrounds together. They would like to see projected revenues in the future.

Motion made by Bruce Gantner, seconded by Lynda Sanchez, to approve the fee increases as presented. There were no amendments. Rachel Jankowitz abstained. Motion was approved.

The RAC asked for guidelines on voting. Jeff said the AZ RAC used *Robert's Rules of Order*.

4. Meeting adjourned at 10 a.m.
5. Minutes submitted by: Karen Meadows, Scribe
6. Date approved: