

**NORTHEASTERN GREAT BASIN
RESOURCE ADVISORY COUNCIL
(NEGBRAC)
MEETING MINUTES
May 3 & 4, 2001
Ely, NV**

May 3 - Tour of Eastern Nevada Landscape Restoration Project

May 4 - Business Meeting

Resource Advisory Council (RAC) Members Present and Category Represented:

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|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Jeff White | (1) Mining |
| Dave Tattam | (2) Wild Horse & Burro |
| Vince Garcia, Chairman | (3) Native American |
| Bill Upton | (1) Mining |
| Bob Edwards | (1) Transportation & ROW |
| Patsy Tomera | (3) Public at Large |
| Donald King | (2) Wildlife |
| Jon Muller | (2) Recreation |

Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Representatives Present:

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|--------------|--|
| Dave Stout | Associate Field Manager, Elko Field Office |
| Gene Kolkman | Field Manager, Ely Field Office |
| Jerry Smith | Field Manager, Battle Mountain Field Office |
| Jo Simpson | Chief, Office of Communications, Nevada State Office |
| Debi Martin | Contact Representative, Ely Field Office |

Other Attendees:

| | |
|---------------|--------------------------------------|
| Bob Vaught | USFS Supervisor, Humboldt-Toiyabe NF |
| Jerry Green | USFS, Ely Ranger Station |
| Virginia King | Public at Large |
| Pam Bolas | Public at Large |
| Norma Tattam | National Wild Horse Association |

Note to readers: A copy of each attachment listed in the text of, and at the end of these minutes is on file with the official copy of the minutes in the Ely Field Office of the BLM. Persons desiring to view attachments should contact Mrs. Debi Martin at (775)289-1800.

Welcome and Introduction

I. MINUTES:

- Tabled until next meeting due to lack of a quorum.

II. SOUTHERN NEVADA PUBLIC LANDS MANAGEMENT ACT:

- Dave Stout, AFM-Elko Field Office, BLM
Due to status of Land Use Plans, any suggestions of acquisition under the SNPLMA will require a Land Use Plan amendment.
- Jerry Smith, FM-Battle Mountain Field Office, BLM
The only parcel Battle Mountain was interested in acquiring was Lockes Ranch in Railroad Valley. There has been an inability to agree on an appraised value, so there is very little chance that this will move forward.
- The RAC will review any further recommendations before the State RAC meeting in the fall.

III. WILD HORSE AND BURRO:

- Jerry Smith, FM-Battle Mountain Field Office, BLM (Attachment 1)
Nevada is currently updating the Tactical Plan. Nevada determined early last month that the WH&B program would be over spent by approximately \$1.7 million by the end of FY 2001. This is due mainly to the fact that no funding was provided for holding horses in Fallon.

IV. WEED FREE HAY:

- Dave Stout, AFM-Elko Field Office, BLM
There is an Environmental Assessment (EA) being written by Chris Ross at the Nevada State Office of the BLM. Approximately 20 comments have been received in response to scoping, mostly positive. The main concern seems to be transportation of non-certified hay. The EA should be out within the next two months. Hopefully there will be another update at the next meeting of the Northeastern Great Basin RAC.

V. 3809 MINING REGULATIONS:

- The 3809 regulations are currently undergoing a comment/review period. There are three options at this time: (1) continue with the new regulations, (2) reject the new regulations, (3) combine the new regulations with the old regulations. Jo Simpson of the Nevada State Office of the BLM said they were hoping to have a decision by summer.

VI. STATUS OF JOINT BLM & USFS RESOURCE ADVISORY COUNCILS:

- Robert Vaught - Supervisor, USFS, Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest
With passage of Payments to the States Act in October of last year, counties will be able to increase the fees they receive from activities on the National Forest. The basic concept being that activities that generate funds on the National Forest have been declining over the last 15 years thereby reducing the amounts the counties receive. Under this new act, counties are allowed to select the high 3 years out of the last 10 years and to receive that amount every year. This will allow most counties to receive as much as 40% more than the average over the last 10 years until 2006. At that time the act will either be renewed, revised, or deleted.

The act also states that any counties receiving more than \$100,000 will need to spend 15 - 20% of their money on projects in the National Forest. It also states that if the county selects the high 3, they must develop a Resource Advisory Council (RAC) in order to recommend which projects to spend money on. In the State of Nevada, Nye County is the only county that this rule would apply to. At this time Nye County has not made a decision on developing a RAC of its own or utilizing an existing RAC.

Within Nevada, the US Forest Service considers the RACs a valuable tool and would like participate as much as possible. Due to the differences in the technical processes of the Bureau of Land Management and the US Forest Service, a joint RAC would have to be approved by the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture. Currently the US Forest Service is trying to get permission to participate on the existing RACs under the BLM authorities. This would require a change in the RAC Charters that are due for review this year anyway.

The new Forest Planning Regulations, which were recently approved, require the development of RACs to advise the Forest Service in their Forest Planning Process. Therefore, they will be required to either participate with the existing RACs or develop their own.

- **A vote of all members present was in favor of U S Forest Service participation in the Northeastern Great Basin Resource Advisory Council. A letter stating such was drafted and sent to the Designated Federal Officer (DFO) for the Northeastern Great Basin Resource Advisory Council (Attachment 2).** Since all three RACs in Nevada support this, it is reasonable to assume the charter will be changed to include the USFS before it is sent to Washington in June for review.
- **Public Comment Period**

VII. OFF HIGHWAY VEHICLE GUIDELINES:

- Jon Muller, RAC Member and OHV Subcommittee Chairperson
Jon presented the Draft Standards and Guidelines for OHV Use to the RAC (Attachment 3). There was a great deal of discussion and recommendations regarding verbiage. It was suggested that the words “responsible care” be used in the document. It was also suggested that reclamation for damage done be included. It was recommended that the ad-hoc groups from Elko and Ely be invited to the next RAC meeting in Eureka. Right of Access was an issue. It was determined that “definitions” would be a very important part of the document. The BLM representatives felt that the principals behind the document should be “to not disturb previously undisturbed land with vehicles, thereby reducing the spread of noxious weeds, the threat of soil erosion and environmental destruction” and “staying on existing roads and trails as much as possible”. A decision was made to invite the OHV groups from Elko, Nye and White Pine Counties that have been working on this issue to the next NEGBRAC meeting for discussion. At this time, the RAC doesn’t expect these guidelines to be completed before next fiscal year.

VIII. VEGETATION GUIDELINES:

- Bill Upton, RAC Member
A draft document is out (Attachment 4). If anyone would like to comment on the document please notify Hudson Glimp. The purpose of the guidelines is to express the level of understanding the RAC has for the issues and what the issues are, and to establish the value of management practices in reaching the goal of a healthy landscape. This document addresses the vegetation communities in the NEGBRAC area. It was noted that riparian communities should be listed in the document as a separate vegetative community.

IX. CALIFORNIA TRAIL VISITOR’S CENTER:

- Dave Stout, AFM, Elko Field Office-BLM
A proposal was made by some citizens in Elko to establish a California Trail Visitor Center similar to the Oregon Trail Interpretive Center in Baker City, Oregon. Elko County has pledged \$1,000,000, the City of Elko \$2,000,000, the State of Nevada \$3,000,000 and the Federal Government \$12,000,000 for construction. It originally was proposed that the center be built at the Hunter Interchange, on Interstate 80, west of Elko. There have been six site proposals and the BLM and Visitors Center Advisory Board will begin looking at the proposals next week. It’s possible that there may be a decision by May 11th.

X. FIELD MANAGERS REPORT:

- Gerald Smith, Field Manager-Battle Mountain Field Office, BLM (Attachments 5 & 6) Regarding the Callahan Wild Horse Gather: Appropriate Management Level (AML) has not been set at this time. The final decision will hopefully be completed by June and will set AML for that area. They are hoping the final decision will be completed before the planned wild horse gather so that they can bring the herd management area (HMA) to AML at that time. The last gather in that area was in 1997 and they had to leave 300 to 400 horses over the estimated AML due to lack of funds.

In 1997 a Draft National Wildland Fire Policy was issued due to the Storm King, Colorado wildland fire accident. In April of that year, Battle Mountain determined that the 1986 Shoshone-Eureka Fire Plan was not in compliance with the 1997 Fire Policy but that the Tonopah Range Management Plan (RMP) was.

- Dave Stout, AFM- Elko Field Office, BLM (Attachments 7 & 8) There will be a Sage Grouse Symposium in Boise, Idaho June 4th through 7th. Kate Kitchel, Field Manager-Boise Field Office was wondering if the NEGBRAC would like to meet with the Idaho RACs during the symposium.
- Gene Kolkman, Field Manager-Ely Field Office, BLM (Attachment 9 & 10) A brief overview of the Sierra Pacific - Silver State East Project and the Wild Horse and Burro gather schedule for the next four fiscal years.

Gene also shared information about the Eastern Nevada Landscape Restoration Project tour this summer. It will take place June 21, 22 and 23, 2001. If anyone is interested in attending, please let him know.

- There was a brief discussion on how the current RAC Members, whose terms are due to expire, might go about reapplying for another term. Applications were handed out to those that were interested. Dave Stout told the RAC members that those interested in reappointment need to send a recommendation letter and application to Helen Hankins, Field Manager-Elko, BLM.
- Bill Upton noted that the Elko County Draft Plan on Sage Grouse was out and has been distributed fairly widely. Some of the RAC members felt it would be appropriate for them to look at and perhaps comment on at their next meeting. Robert Vaught mentioned that he is a member of the Governor's Team on Sage Grouse and that the intent of the Statewide plan is to be an umbrella document that identifies issues and talks about general guidelines. Underneath the Governor's general umbrella plan, there is the expectation local plans will be developed throughout the state that will include state and federal agency efforts. All of the plans, when put together, should accomplish good things for Sage Grouse.
- The next meeting will be in Eureka on August 3rd. The meeting will be held in the basement of the Opera House. There will be a \$10.00 fee for use of the building.

- Items for the next meeting agenda will include: Battle Mountain Fire Use Plan, OHV Guidelines, Elko District Land Exchange update. If anyone has anything else, please let Vince Garcia or Helen Hankins know.
- **Public Comment Period**
- **Bill Upton made a motion that the meeting be adjourned. It was seconded by Bob Edwards with all in favor.**
- Meeting was adjourned by Chairman Vince Garcia.

Date Approved:

Approved by:

Minutes by Mrs. Debi Martin, Contact Representative, Ely Field Office-BLM