

**STEENS MOUNTAIN ADVISORY COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
February 1 & 2, 2007
Burns, Oregon**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Hoyt Wilson, Grazing Permittee, Princeton, OR
David Bilyeu, Environmental Representative – Statewide, Bend, OR
William Renwick, Environmental Representative, Burns, OR
Stacy Davies, Chair, Grazing Permittee, Frenchglen, OR
Pam Hardy, Vice–Chair, Dispersed Recreation, Bend, OR
Paul Bradley, Mechanized or Consumptive Recreation, Hines, OR
Michael Beagle, Fish & Recreational Fishing, Eagle Point, OR
Richard Angstrom, No Financial Interest, Salem, OR
Fred Otley, Private Landowner, Diamond, OR
Cynthia Witzel, Recreation Permit Holder, Frenchglen, OR (1st day)

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Brenda Sam, Burns Paiute Tribe, Burns, OR
Steve Purchase, State Liaison, Salem, OR
Ron VanDomelen, Wild Horse Management, Powell Butte, OR
Cynthia Witzel, Recreation Permit Holder, Frenchglen, OR (2nd day)

DESIGNATED FEDERAL OFFICIAL (DFO):

Dana Shuford, District Manager, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Hines, OR

DESIGNATED FEDERAL OFFICIAL ASSISTANTS:

Rhonda Karges, Management Support Specialist, BLM, Hines, OR
Amy Freitag, Clerical Assistant, BLM, Hines, OR

FACILITATORS:

Dale White, Burns, OR

PRESENTERS

Karla Bird, Andrews Field Manager, BLM, Hines, OR
Mark Sherbourne, Natural Resource Specialist, BLM, Hines, OR
Rick Hall, Natural Resource Specialist, BLM, Hines, OR

COMMENTING PUBLIC:

John O'Connor, Back Country Horseman

OTHERS PRESENT:

Kelly Hazen, BLM, Hines, OR
Tara Martinak, BLM, Hines, OR
Doug Linn, BLM, Hines, OR
Joan Suther, BLM, Hines, OR

Matt Obradovich, BLM, Hines, OR
Darren Brumback, BLM, Hines, OR
Bill Marlett, Oregon Natural Desert Association (ONDA)

Steve Hammond, Frenchglen, OR

WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS, HOUSEKEEPING AND AGENDA:

The meeting was called to order and self introductions made.

CHAIRMAN UPDATE

- Stacey noted Ron VanDomelen is not present; Ron has stomach cancer and will not be able to attend meetings for awhile. Sometime this spring, when he is healed from surgery and knows how things are going, he will make a decision on whether or not he can continue as a SMAC member.
- Dan Jordan has received a measure 37 waiver. This gives him the ability to develop his property how he sees fit. It is possible this decision could be appealed.

DFO UPDATE

- Dana noted Dan Jordan receiving the measure 37 waiver would slow down the BLM's efforts in getting the cooperative management agreement with Dan completed.
- Dana commented on the information sheet that was passed out concerning the Oregon Board of Forestry's Federal Forest Lands Advisory Committee. He wanted the SMAC members to be aware of the board and the purpose of the board.
- The new state director is Ed Shepherd. One of Ed's goals is to get out to each district to see the districts and meet the people.
- Kathleen Clark has retired. No replacement or acting has been named at this time.
- The Bureau, at the national level, is conducting pilot tests for a national rangeland monitoring strategy. Central and eastern Oregon have been selected for this higher level of monitoring. Plots in our area will be read this summer. It is not tied to any site-specific allotment monitoring or the CMPA monitoring.
- Dana noted there will be 4 openings for nominations coming up for the SMAC, including no financial interest, Burns Paiute Tribe, mechanized or consumptive recreation and grazing permittee.
- Concerning the RMP, which is under litigation, the most current status is the plaintiffs have applied for summary judgment and the BLM has put in their reply. No hearing date has been set.

FIELD MANAGER REPORT

Karla noted two handouts in the SMAC members' folders. One handout included a report submitted to the national office last October which was basically a report on what was happening on the National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS) unit. The NLCS is all national monuments, the CMPA and other special areas in the BLM. Last year there were outside groups interested in the NLCS units that gave the BLM a report card without the BLM knowing what they were being measured against. Grades given were all Ds or Fs. The BLM decided to issue their own reports so people would have an idea what was accomplished during the last fiscal year. Karla noted they could look through the report later and if they had any questions, they could talk with her. The second handout contained information covering the NEPA process and plans currently in development for

the year. Karla also noted the inventory, monitoring and on-the-ground projects that will be going on this year.

TRAVEL MANAGEMENT PLAN

Mark Sherbourne gave an update on the Travel Management Plan and noted a handout in their packets summarizing scoping comments received. Also in the packet was a letter from Congressman Walden and Senator Smith. The group reviewed the scoping comments and Congressional letter. Mark noted a list of issues BLM would like the SMAC to think about and provide feedback. He would like to see a recommendation or recommendations by the SMAC by the end of the time allowed if at all possible. The group discussed their views, feelings and concerns about the Travel Management Plan. The group made a list of topics that could be discussed, agreed to go to lunch and come back to continue with this discussion.

Motion made: Stacy made the motion all cherry stems be left open. (No second) Motion died due to lack of a second.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comment.

TRAVEL MANAGEMENT PLAN CONTINUED

The group came back from lunch and continued to discuss the possibility of making a recommendation on the Travel Management Plan.

Motion made: Rich made the motion that:

1. The BLM combine the RMP and scoping maps as the baseline.
2. The BLM create a map for landowners showing and designating access routes. This map should be included in the EA.
3. The BLM create a map for service permit use designating permit routes. This map should be included in the EA, but not necessarily published beyond that.
4.
 - a. For historical and obscure routes that the BLM already knows what the designation should be they include those designations on the map for the EA.
 - b. For historical and obscure routes that BLM does not know the designation for shall be called route “under evaluation”. Routes under evaluation should be evaluated based on criteria in 5.
 - i. Evaluation of routes “under evaluation” shall be completed no later than the completion of the Comprehensive Recreation Plan.
 - ii. The use on routes “under evaluation” should continue to be the uses currently and customarily associated with those routes.

5. The BLM should adaptively manage routes within the TMP allowing persons (or organizations) to seek change in the status of the route based on the listed criteria. Which includes: road conditions, maintenance info., Resource conditions, existing uses, existing needs, historical information, future needs cultural information, economic information, ecological issues, road density duplicative uses/ displacement, fish & wildlife, wilderness quality, public use / use level

(Bill seconded)

Unanimous Agreement:

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February 2, 2007

INTRODUCTIONS

Meeting was called to order and self introductions were made.

APPROVAL OF DECEMBER MINUTES

Bill moved to approve the December minutes as presented. (David seconded)

Consensus: December minutes approved.

ACTION ITEMS REVIEW

- Implementation Plan is still ongoing.
- Under Dec-05, issues to SMAC for recommendation regarding mountain biking and showing opened/closed roads with a color system on maps. This will be part of the Travel Management Plan.
- Under May-06, Endorse grants – delete, not an action item.
- The group discussed the issue of writing a letter of recommendation to the Watershed Council supporting the grants applied for. It was decided with the short timeframe they would leave this one alone.

CHAIR ELECTION

Bill nominated Stacy Davies for reappointment of Chair.

Consensus: Stacy Davies will continue as chair.

Bill nominated Pam Hardy for reappointment of Vice-Chair.

Consensus: Pam Hardy will continue as Vice-Chair.

MONITORING PLAN

Rick Hall solicited comments on the CMPA Monitoring Plan. It was suggested to make a photo database open to the public and the public would be able to submit to the database. It was noted it would be good for public involvement. It was also noted monitoring has a lot of involvement and you have to be careful. Also, there is no replacement for the BLM's monitoring. The group discussed this suggestion further. It was suggested they test this on ongoing projects like the North Steens EIS or WJMA.

Motion made: Pam made the motion that the BLM consider implementing this plan with a publicly-accessible database to which the public can upload digital photographs that they take at set photo points that BLM predetermines via GPS with direction of the photograph given and is set up to monitor just the North Steens EIS, WJMA, and Wilderness. (Bill seconded)

Unanimous Agreement: The BLM consider implementing this plan with a publicly-accessible database to which the public can upload digital photographs that they take at set photo points that BLM predetermines via GPS with direction of the photograph given and is set up to monitor just the North Steens EIS, WJMA, and Wilderness.

There was continued discussion on the monitoring plan. Opinions were expressed and suggestions made. The suggestions were given to Rick for reference.

Motion made: Hoyt made the motion that the BLM adopt the Plan as amended and integrate David and Paul's comments into the Plan. (Rich seconded)

Unanimous Agreement: The BLM adopt the Plan as amended and integrate David and Paul's comments into the Plan.

They then went on to discuss the prioritization of the monitoring methodologies. All members noted their opinions on the prioritization.

Motion made: Rich made the motion that the SMAC recommends that the BLM's short term monitoring priorities be focused on areas that assist them in defending their recourse management decisions. Also recommends to the BLM that long term they look at these priorities that have been put on the board (1. Riparian/Wetlands, 2. Fish/Redband Trout, tied for 3. Social/Economics, Transportation/off-highway vehicles, and wilderness/wilderness study areas/wild and scenic rivers) for the whole CMPA. (Pam seconded)

Unanimous Agreement: The SMAC recommends that the BLM's short term monitoring priorities be focused on areas that assist them in defending their recourse management decisions. Also recommends to the BLM that long term they look at these priorities that have been put on the board (1. Riparian/Wetlands, 2. Fish/Redband Trout, tied for 3. Social/Economics, Transportation/off-highway vehicles, and wilderness/wilderness study areas/wild and scenic rivers) for the whole CMPA.

The group went around the table and stated their personal priorities. Their priorities and Projects/Areas include:

- Transportation
- Camp sites (public recreation) (CMA w/ private landowners for camping)
- North Steens/Five Creeks – monitoring as implemented, ecosystem restoration
- By Projects – Riparian info gaps/wetlands
- Blitzen System/Big Indian
- Page Springs Weir
- Stonehouse allotment
- The "Mountain"

Agenda Item: Purposes of the Act (Bill integrating science into it)

PURPOSES OF THE ACT

The meaning of the Act was discussed and how, when the group is having a discussion, they need to remember what is stated in the Act and the purpose of the SMAC. The group went around the table and discussed each person's view, while focusing on Purpose of the Act numbers 11 & 12 and Purpose/Objectives of the CMPA numbers 2 & 4.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

John O'Connor, President of Back Country Horseman, talked about getting a horse camp facility on the North Loop Road. They have ridden around Fish Lake and found a place in the area that would make a good horse camp. They have gone back and forth between the BLM and the State on this issue. He is back to the BLM. They would like to put a bare

bones camp facility in the Fish Lake area. When he gets calls about where to go horseback riding, he sends them to South Steens and they like the camping and the trails.

RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENTS

There was a question on how many people they have riding the Mountain for recreational purposes each year. There is always someone on the Mountain when John is there; he would say during the summer months, June-September, 40-50 people a month. The people's biggest concern is the road. There was also discussion on how big and what they would want to include in the area. Items include someplace to unload and access the Mountain (similar to the South Steens Campground). They talked about problems with Lily Lake; main reason was safety with the Loop Road being so close and the speed people drive the road. Second choice would be the Moon Hill road/intersection. It was noted the BLM has been working with Dan Jordan for a while and they have a rough draft on a CMA. They will talk to him to see what they could do to add this as an area.

MARCH MEETING AGENDA ITEMS

- Wildland Fire Use (w/map – fire use area)
- Public Information – Briefing (15 minutes) (full discussion at May meeting)
- WJMA update/video - during lunch
- Recreation Summary (2006) May
- Review Wilderness/WSR's Plan - May
- Purposes of the Act - Bill-Science, Fred -update on recent and ongoing scientific studies
- TMP
- Process for a subcommittee for discussing obscure routes
- Horseback parking area on North Steens – Interim Solution (Fred will talk to landowners)
- South Steens water developments

Submitted by Amy Freitag

The Steens Mountain Advisory Council approved the minutes as amended on March 9, 2007.

Stacy Davies, Chair

Date