

***John Day Snake
Resource Advisory Council
Meeting Minutes
May 2, 2006-Field trip to Warm Springs Biomass Facility
May 3, 2006-RAC Business Meeting
Prineville, OR-Best Western Inn***

Field Trip attendees: Art Waugh, Mike Hayward, David Riley, Terry Drever-Gee, Berta Youtie, Adriane Borgias, Cindy Savage, Dan Forsea, John Tanaka, Elaine Brong, Barron Bail, Jeff Walter, Teal Purrington, Virginia Gibbons.

Field Trip presentors: Cal Mukumoto, Ken Borchert

Business Meeting Coordinator/Recorder: Virginia Gibbons

Facilitator: Teal Purrington

Meeting Called to Order-John Tanaka, Chairman

Introductions/New Facilitator-John Tanaka

RAC Members present: John Tanaka-Chair, David Riley, Dan Forsea, Michael Hayward, Art Waugh, David Moryc, Phil Shephard, Terry Drever-Gee, Art Waugh, Adriane Borgias, Phil Shephard,

Time serving in JDS RAC:

Art-3 years

Terry-since '95

Berta Youtie-11 years

Adriane-since 98

Tanaka-since beginning

Bail-since 2000

Montgomery-since 2002

Hatfield-since 2002

Henderson-since 2001

Riley-3 years

Hayward-since beginning

RAC Federal Officials present: Elaine Marquis-Brong-OR BLM State Director Barron Bail-Prineville DM, Dave Henderson-Vale DM, David Hatfield-Umatilla NF (for Kevin Martin), Ken Anderson-Whitman Unit District Ranger, Wallowa Whitman NF (for Steve Ellis), Mike Montgomery-Blue Mountain District Ranger, Malheur NF (acting for Stan Benes), Jeff Walter-Ochoco National Forest Supervisor, Nancy Lull-Baker Resource Area Manager, Vale District BLM,

Visitors: Brent Ralston-Prineville BLM, Miles Brown-Branch Chief OSO State Office, Kim Titus-Branch Chief for Planning-OSO, Tracy Bowerman-ONDA, Cindy Savage-, Berry Phelps-Outdoor Recreation Planner, Mike Williams-Writer/Editor, Tina Welch-Central Oregon Resource Area Manager

Presentors: Brent Ralston, (John Day RMP); Mitch Bulthuis (Blue Mtn Forests Noxious Weed EIS); , Blue Mtn Forests Revision-Dave Hatfield, Miles Brown-OR/WA Transportation Planning Strategy.

RAC members not present: Frank Bird, William Lang, Shirley Muse, Robert Parker, David Moryc.

Federal officials not present or represented:

***Attendance does not meet the requirement of a quorum**

Travel voucher procedures

Mail vouchers to:

Judy Bolander
3050 NE 3rd St
Prineville, OR 97754

Questions about vouchers? Please contact Judy at 541-416-6875

Feb 7th meeting approval (conditional based on lack of quorum)

Motion: Dave Riley

Second: Art Waugh

All in favor, none opposed.

Rac Business Update-Barron

Need two names for each position

Titles open are grazing permittee, fisheries wildlife, academician, recreation

Recreational RACs/National Update-Elaine

Idea of combining RACs partially due to difficulty in filling positions

Joint FS/BLM National Leadership Meeting-discussed common issues:

- Energy-coal, gas, non-renewable-driving national economics
- Dependence is 60% to other than US sources of energy
- Hydrogen cell technology
- Impact to BLM-some exploration/significant basin in North Central Oregon, South Central Washington for oil that is capped. Technology currently exists to drill through cap. Recently sold 3 million in leases in that region.
- Biggest piece for BLM is non-renewable with wind and transportation corridors for energy.
- Application for liquid gas pipeline in Western OR to tap into Northern California pipeline.

- Major EIS on electric transportation, gas & oil. Public mtg in Portland in May/June. Combo of govt entities, municipalities and energy co's.
- BLM is most involved in Energy Act for developing domestic resources.
- FS/BLM trying to meet deadlines for permitting-may shift approach between now & 2009.
- National priority for National Fire Plan implementation and Forest & Range Health Restoration Act.
- Sage Grouse Strategy-public & private land mgrs striving to work together across boundaries; 5 working groups established in OR. State wildlife strategy provides mechanism for receiving funds. Sage grouse strategic plan for OR rated as very good, comprehensive plan.
- Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act-maintaining the opportunity to have fees on appropriate recreation sites. This requires an advisory council. FS/BLM in OR/WA are working closely together to develop one recreation RAC. Timeline: Waiting on Secretaries to sign off on proposal within next month.
- Intent is for RAC to start working in fiscal '07.
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ACTION ITEM: Developing improvements in WSAs. Looking at a statewide policy to preserve conditions over the next year. Looking for RAC input.

ACTION ITEM: How would the John Day Snake RAC like to participate with the recreation RAC or potentially apply?

Q. Normally, a person can only sit on one RAC at a time. Will our members be able to sit on both RACs?

A. Yes, we will consider that. Please help us recruit for members/nominations.

Hells Canyon Complex Re-licensing-Dave Henderson

Energy Policy Act of 2005 provides opportunity for relicensing.

Upcoming hearings scheduled (90 days to conduct hearings/ judge make ruling)

Company challenged six of nineteen mandatory conditions

Once judge issues decisions, BLM is required to modify conditions and consider company's proposed alternatives. Changes are incorporated into EIS, and become part of the FERC license.

Working with Idaho Power on a possible settlement

Once judge rules, the process is complete

Klamath FERC project is also entering hearing/appeals stage

OR/WA Transportation Planning Strategy-Miles Brown

Elaine mailed a letter to RAC outlining Transportation Planning as a priority

In past, BLM has focused on OHV and OHV designations in RMPs

There is a need to go beyond and look at entire transportation system for grazing, timber, utility corridors, rights of way, access.

Considerable guidance coming from WO

OHV Coordinator at State Office retired in January. That position was working on cooperative planning with FS/BLM.

Chris Konoff will be new coordinator for OR. Chris currently works at Imperial Sand Dunes Attended last SE OR RAC and asked them to put together a coordinated subgroup with the John Day Snake RAC for a transportation strategy-John Day Basin RMP as example
Define limited use, etc

Chris put together a team that has members from each BLM district, and a subgroup from SE OR & JDS RACs. SEOR RAC provided 3 members for the team to develop common understandings for Statewide OHV strategy.

Primarily focused on Eastern OR vs Western OR
Subgroup will involve more OHV group.

OHV subgroup: Art, Adriane, Shirley, Phil

Action: Would the JDS RAC be willing to join the group?

RAC Comments:

With all RMPS coming up for revision, these concerns should be looked at closely

A. This will not be part of the planning efforts-it's bigger picture/larger scale.

I've had conversations with ROW holders that are concerned about access.

Q. At this planning level, would a person representing wildlife make sense or is that further down in the process?

A. It would make sense at both levels.

We want to allow language that recognizes administrative uses, which includes emergency use.

Q. Is there a role for enforcement at the policy level?

A. Yes

We use terms open, limited and closed in our planning process. Not everyone understands what this means. Controversy brews because there are misunderstandings and different interpretations.

Q. Are you going to be looking at ROW for mining claims?

A. Yes, we will need the criteria

Three folks identified for helping with the Transportation Strategy Group: Tom Harris (OHV), Walt Van Dyke (ODFW) and Dave Vandenburg (dispersed rec/lawyer).

John Day Basin RMP

Introduction of team members present

Published NOI Feb 21/public comment period closed 4/26/06. Three hundred letters in total received; approximately 180 were form letters.

Five public meetings held in Fossil, John Day, Pendleton, Forest Grove and Bend.

Comment analysis in process

OHV use is a concern-a proposal for a destination OHV park was released the day we had our public meeting in John Day (Little Canyon Mt). This prompted another public meeting on the Little Canyon Mtn OHV concerns. Multiple issues with trash dumping, fuels, shooting continue in this area and through the planning effort, we need to delineate whether to keep the area open, closed or limited to OHV use.

Revising existing plans and including the acquired lands in the North Fork

A focal point for the area is grazing

Q. How are you dealing with the T&E issues for new plant inventories ?

A. Not aware of that-need to follow up

Wild and Scenic River Designation/Recommendation report due next month

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern-paleontology

Visual Resource Inventory

Zoning changes

Site specific concerns identified in public meetings, comment process

Broad representation in our cooperating agency group(Sherman, Grant & Wheeler Co), NOAA fisheries, USFWS, State Parks and Rec OHV, ODOT, OR Dept of Fish & Wildlife, Warm Springs. Looking to identify cooperative transportation mgmt strategy.

Analysis of the Management Situation

Reviews all current mgmt, conditions and are we headed towards or away from desired conditions?

Expect draft ready by mid-June-sent to State Office and cooperating agencies and potentially the RAC, to look at for review. Expectation is document will be a brief summary.

ACTION ITEM (Brent): We will send copies of draft AMS to RAC on request.

Timeline (Elaine): We are being challenged to get plans done. We need well timed discussions and comments. We want participation but there will not be as much time to do so. Our intent is to get response and implement the plan.

Comment: VEG EIS-Not having hard copies made it very difficult to comment on time.

Through scoping meetings, community meetings, cooperator meetings & RAC involvement, we want conversations up front before we issue the draft document to avoid extensive re-writing.

State Director guidelines is the checks & balance for the document.

Intent is that each alternative balances all the resource concerns and should be potentially selectable.

Outline of RAC involvement

Develop Criteria for Assessing Areas for OHV Use or Non-Use

OHV-Open (unrestricted use), limited (day or seasonal use, etc) or closed?

Where are the areas that we will risk additional impacts from OHV? We need to weigh risk vs benefits

Resource Concerns

Human Concerns

ACTION ITEM: Propose subgroup comes up with criteria for designation of OHV use and non-use.

Q. How does what you are asking for overlap with what Miles is asking for with the transportation strategy?

A. Miles is looking to get have some information from his team/sub-group this fall. This should apply to John Day Basin and help develop alternatives.

ACTION ITEM: Handout: First Draft of AMS OHV resource description-send comments to Brent Ralston or Berry Phelps at Prineville BLM.

John Day Basin RMP

Blue Mountain Forest Plan Revision Update-David Hatfield

Open house meetings are scheduled in May; RAC members encouraged to attend.

Available at the public meetings:

- Chpt 1, the Vision
- Roadless inventory
- Wild and Scenic Rivers inventory
- Maps-Lands suited for timber production & harvest, lands suited for grazing, recreation residences, socio-economic (sense of place)
- Narrative of criteria of lands suited or not suited for OHVs
- Narrative for wildland fire use
- Work is being done outside the NEPA process
- Intent is to design a plan that is responsive to public and internal input
- No additional funding upon completion

ACTION REQUESTED: If the RAC would like to make a response, we will appreciate one coordinated response by June 30. Separate members may respond outside of the RAC. Dave Schmitt is willing to meet with subgroup members of individuals on request.

Blue Mountain Forests Noxious Weeds EIS

Handouts for Malheur, Umatilla, and Wallow-Whitman NF, Information Contacts, Comments Draft for public review by 3/2007, final analysis by 8/2008.

Powerpoint hard copies provided: "Invasive Plants: Blue Mountains Site Specific NEPA"

ACTION REQUESTED: How RAC can help....

- Get word out/inventory is not complete
- Adjacent landowner cooperation/concerns/priority-maps updated by August 06
- Help with successful treatment strategies

- Comment-we need to know what you think
- Keep informed of the process and validate if we are on the right track.

Q. Don't see the capacity for a rapid response. Do you have anything planned?

A. Yes, we are looking at a rapid response. We may be limited to do site-specific NEPA. The FS Weed EIS team has been working on that. Yes, we have been in contact with them.

BLM Update-VEG EIS, Grazing Rule, Wild Horse & Burro-Miles Brown

VEG EIS

Currently limited to 4 herbicides.

National Veg Treatment EIS will give us more capacity

Thank you for your comments to us

Have received 1,000 comments and 3,000 for letter on the Draft; final tentatively scheduled for fall.

ACTION ITEM FOR MILES: When you have summarized the comments, the RAC is interested in seeing those.

Revised Grazing Rule-

Handouts-Overview of Grazing Rule, press release

Expect to publish final rule late May/early June-30 day wait period to implement rule

Q. Have been hearing rumors of Healthy Rangeland Act? Do you know anything about it?

A. It's out there but it could be difficult to get it before Congress this year.

Wild Horse and Burro

Handouts-population data, status briefing

Spent last 3 years getting to maintenance numbers for herds

Need to gather 400-500 horses/year to keep levels

Received 1 million grant to update Wild Horse Corrals at Burns Facility.

Accelerate gatherings in FY08

We've met two milestones in BLM: We are at maintenance numbers for wild horse & burro and want to keep at that level, and completed all billings for permittees for grazing on time.

Public Comment Period

None

AGENDA ITEM SEPT: Grazing permit renewals-RAC advice '08, 09, agenda item for next meeting

ACTION ITEM (VIRGINIA):Mail out current version of Standard & Guides to all members

Recreation RAC-recreation fee structures

From a manager's standpoint, it would be valuable to have RAC representation for other resources

ACTION ITEM:

David Riley/Art Waugh is interested in potential liason.

Motion: Berta motion that JDS RAC potentially nominate Dave Riley and Art Waugh

Second motion: Terry Drever-Gee

All in favor, none opposed

All motions approved pending a full quorum approval

Coming: WSA Policy. Is there interest on the RAC?

Timeline: FY07 work plan

John Day Basin RMP

Q. Do we need a subgroup? Would it make more sense to work on Miles' committee/request first and then apply it to John Day Plan?

A. Same group will likely work on both.

John Day Basin RMP sub-group identified:

Chair: Berta, Members: Adriane, Art and Phil, David.

Transportation Strategy Sub-group: Wait until we get additional info from Miles

Blue Mountain Forest Plan Sub-group:

Chair: Terry Drever-Gee Members: Phil, Shirley, Mike

ACTION ITEM: RAC make comments on Blue Mtn Forest Plan Revision by June 30.

ACTION ITEM: Virginia submit Federal register for full RAC conference call on June 15th 7 pm-Blue Mtn Forest Plan Revision, Noxious Weeds EIS.

Call is for approval on comment letters drafted by noxious weed & planning subgroups-

Noxious Weed Subgroup call on June 8th at 7 pm.

Blue Mountain Forest Plan Subgroup call on June 8th at 8 pm.

OHV subcommittee: Art Waugh, Adriane Borgias,

Transportation Strategy Subgroup:

Frank Bird, Berta Youtie and Dan Forsea as potential members

John will visit with Frank & Dan and will let Miles know.

Berta willing to be a member.

ACTION ITEM: Finalize work plan.

Subgroup updates

Sage Grouse-scheduled meeting was cancelled. Birds have been collared to determine distribution.

Noxious Weeds-Working on 3 Forests Veg EIS

When the RAC submits comments, are those discussed? Yes, they are shown in the comment analysis. Elaine read the letter and passed them along.
Different comments are addressed differently depending on where they are going.

ACTION ITEM FOR EACH AGENDA: Track any feedback from comments-is their feedback ready to give back to the RAC?

Roundtable

Mike Hayward-

Safety Net reauthorization/different concepts on how to fund. Wallowa County is looking at how to operate without it. Will have significant impact on access to federal land base if safety net goes away. Because of declining revenues, the FS is not maintaining roads at the level that they have in the past. Is becoming an issue for large private inholdings. County is being asked to take those roads over/challenge due to shrinking budgets.

Ken Anderson/Steve Ellis-

Wallowa is starting spring burning process. Got 700 acres done last week. Completed 8,500 acres last fall, shooting for 4500 this spring.

Salvage sale coming out this spring for Fly Fires

25 million total sale volume this year

Coming towards completion on workforce '08 planning

Good snowpack-20-25 feet in areas.

Dave Henderson-

The pre-hearing conference on Hells Canyon FERC relicense today

July 13-better understand what's happening with settlement

First time working with judge

Yesterday, 3 field managers reported-one in Baker, two in Malheur County

David Hatfield

Umatilla NF is starting spring burning on Heppner RD.

School Fire Salvage Sale DEIS out for 45-day comment period-on forest website

Continuing work on range permit

Timber forum with Senator Smith late last month-Regional Forester, Under Secretary Mark Rey of Ag, timber industry in attendance. Suggest 499 million board feet a year provided by Blue Mountain Forests to keep mills running two shifts per day. Forest given suggestions for points to consider with the revision, and as relates to PACFISH. Region put together draft related to Aquatic Conservation intended to replace PACFISH.

Mike Montgomery for Acting Stan Benes

Roger Williams has gone to a Director position in Region 8. Stan Benes is Acting Forest Supervisor for Malheur.

Looking for windows for spring burning.

Forest has several big projects-HFRA project-recent visit from Senator Wyden. Decision due in July/August.

Crawford, Middle Fork Grazing EIS-looking to decisions this year.

Tight budget-work force decreased. Blue Mtn RD employees went from 100 to 25. Still trying to meet community goals.

Finalizing workforce planning decision for FY07.

Grazing program going well with permittees, public, meeting environmental standards and making environmental improvements.

Replacing culverts for fish passage (25% of miles of streams in R6). Two million dollar grant to replace culverts on State Highway 26.

Phil Shepherd-

Prescribed burn last week joint effort with ODF, TNC and

National Fish & Wildlife Foundation Grant-will fund position at Burns/OSU Field Station. Help with sage grouse/sage steppe habitat. Looking for GIS expertise, biology background, communication skills.

John Tanaka-

August 18 OSU La Grande field station is hosting a trip on.

July 13-15 at research station in Burns-Society for Range Management

Central Oregon as place to pilot data collection for Forest Inventory Analysis and the National Resource Inventory (covers private land) BLM/FS/NRCS/USGS partners.

Nancy Lull-

Spent last 15 months in Kemmer Office in SW Wyoming, prior that in NFC-Public Affairs.

Jeff Walter-

Came here 3 months ago-prior was on Six Rivers for 18 months; prior to that on the Mt Hood NF for 4 years.

Ochoco NF is also burning...looking to increase fuel treatments for maintenance. We need to double what we are doing. Currently treating 16,000 acres/year-1/2 burning, 1/2 mechanical. We are treating 50,000 acres year/ need to treat 100,000.

Involved in Veg EIS-scheduled to have out in next calendar year.

Plenty of NEPA work/appeals

Working actively with school district-concern over dropout rate-want to get kids more interested in careers for natural resources. Request speakers, field trips for grade, middle and high school.

Keep kids in the area. Superintendent, curriculum director and vice-principal all interested.

Talking about Service First more to see if it's working-check in with public and employees.

Berta Youtie-

Pushing commercial production of native plant materials

Terry Drever Gee-

Thanks to the new managers coming in and getting to know us.

Art Waugh

One of our organizations put on presentation for FS on OHV opp's and how to accomplish getting trails in. Presentation was well attended by several NF's.

Note: Brent's handout said Class II was up to 8,000 lbs. That is no longer viable-no longer any upper limit on Class II.

Barron Bail

Appreciate folks attending and people attending the field trip.

Next meeting Sept 12-John Day all-day field trip and Sept 13-business meeting.

/s/ John Tanaka, Chair

/s/ A. Barron Bail, Designated Federal Official