

*Southeast Oregon Resource Advisory Council
April 28, 2011 Lakeview, OR
Meeting Minutes*

RAC Attendees

CATEGORY 1		CATEGORY 2		CATEGORY 3	
X	Mona Drake		Anne Hiller Clark	X	Chad Boyd
X	Dick Leever		Vacant	X	Craig Foster
	Wannie Mackenzie		Vacant	X	Stan Shepardson
X	Kevin Peterman		Diane Pinney		Vacant
X	Jim Walls	X	Bill Renwick		Vacant

Quorum: NO

RAC Federal Official Attendees:

AGENCY		MANAGER		AGENCY		MANAGER	
BLM Burns	X	Kenny McDaniel		BLM Lakeview	X	Carol Benkosky	
BLM Vale	X	Don Gonzalez		Fremont-Winema NF	X	Fred Way	
Malheur NF	X	Doug Jones (Acting)					

Visitors:

Elizabeth Scheeler (for Sen. Merkeley), Heather Whitman, Melvin Partin, Matt Little, Chris Hansen

Designated Federal Official: Don Gonzalez

RAC Chair: Bill Renwick

Notetaker: Pam Robbins

Facilitator: Mark Wilkening

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***Meeting Called to Order 1:10 p.m.***

Housekeeping, introductions and welcome new members – agenda review

***Action Item Review***

All items completed or in process. Affirmed the importance of posting meeting minutes as soon as approved.

***Comparison of BLM & Forest Service NEPA Processes – Don Gonzalez***

Main difference is after the Record of Decision is issued.

***Update on the ODFW Sage-grouse Plan – Craig Foster***

Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife (ODFW) adopted the plan revision on April 22, 2011. A few items go into the rule, becoming law. Plan contains specific objectives for population of the bird, and

specific habitat objectives. Guidelines about how to designate core habitat is adopted in the rule. Other elements – like the Core Habitat Map – can be revised without opening the whole process, as long as the method complies with the requirements of the plan. Plan is available on the ODFW website, with Lakeview being first. Editing Core Habitat Maps is the next step as new information comes in through monitoring and other research. Right now, 38% of the habitat accounts for about 90% of the bird population. Previous discussion of Core I and Core II habitat has changed; it is now Core Habitat, Low Density Habitat, and Other. Each BLM District will edit the maps for their area, and those go online when edits are completed. The edits will correct errors generated by computer, by taking out areas which hadn't and would never be suitable habitat for sage grouse. All implementation team meetings are open to the public, and attendees are welcome to ask questions. The state team meeting will be called when all district edits are completed, so the “umbrella” group overseeing the total effort can consolidate that input and release a final comprehensive map.

**Q:** The plan is a recommendation only?

**A:** For the most part ODFW doesn't manage land. They manage wildlife populations, so the population objectives are what's mandatory to ODFW. All the other objectives, maps and related issues are guidance for those who **do** manage lands. ODFW simply recommends a course of action (ex. approve or avoid a project) in light of the species population goals, but does not control landholder actions.

**Q:** What percentage of the land inventoried ended up in the core habitat?

**A:** The land was largely BLM, and 38% of that land base is core habitat. Including low-density in the Burns District, it's about 70% of BLM's lands there.

**Q:** In trimming the boundaries of the core habitat circles, can you include industrial lands?

**A:** Sure. The key criterion is whether it's in sagebrush. Forests, potato fields, etc. are not going to typically be habitat sage grouse would choose as home range. If the vegetation is predominately sagebrush, it stays as core habitat. Implementation team will make the call about whether areas go in or out of Core Habitat.

**Q:** If a wind project is on private land, is it the County Land Use Plan that dictates whether a project goes forward?

**A:** There's no reference in the Comprehensive Use Plans for most counties. Sagebrush obligates were not a concern when the guidelines for comprehensive plans were developed. Counties can choose to permit a wind energy development if it's consistent with their current planning framework.

**Q:** Is there going to be a potential that a county could designate an area as industrial, and allow blanket approval of projects that would impact the species?

**A:** The ODFW does not have authority to prohibit a project. They are not land managers, but wildlife managers. They would be able to give professional assessment of the impact, and would possibly have to testify in any appeal, but they do not control the land managers. Now that the plan is adopted, the agency needs to develop a strategy for how they will deal with impacts to sagebrush obligates. Discussions between the Division of Land Conservation and Development might need to take this up to clarify roles.

### ***Malheur County Perspective on Wilderness – Judge Dan Joyce***

Malheur County heard from Chris Hansen in 2010, to propose potential wilderness. County suggested going out to the constituencies to see what the overall thinking of the public would be about such a proposal. County heard from the Oregon Cattlemen on the subject, and wrote a letter regarding the 1.5 million acres converting from WSA to wilderness and an added 2 million+ as new wilderness. Skinner cited numerous laws & policies that direct Federal agencies to manage for multiple-use. Oregon Cattlemen's Association does not agree with converting these lands to dedicated wilderness, because they expect there could be some damaging outcomes from changing these lands to a single purpose. Livestock grazing in Malheur County is a traditional use with much benefit to the public in Malheur County, and prohibiting this use would restrict many beneficial activities across the landscape. The cattlemen have heightened concern about the effect that such a change on local communities, their economy, culture, and many other aspects. The ranchers are strongly invested in the sustained health of these lands and their continued use by producers in the area.

**Q:** How many acres in Malheur County?

**A:** There are 9 million + in Malheur County.

**Q:** The 1.5 acres are the ones that have been WSAs for the past 20 years? How has that affected Malheur County?

**A:** The main impact has been limiting the ability to improve the lands: water sources, fencing, etc. The range improvement efforts have helped wildlife as well. The designation of these lands has limited fire prevention efforts, and closing roads places a hardship on many citizens. Some of the roads pre-date the establishment of the BLM and any of the current designations. Open roads are not passable in some cases.

**Q:** What portion of Malheur County is the target of this proposal? Is there grazing and mining activity there? Are there any other uses?

**A:** The southern part is the focus, and besides grazing, there has been mining for coal, gold and other minerals. Any changes would depend on how Congress and the Administration would stipulate any designation. There's a community of OHV recreation, where they seek solitude, and the interest in wind energy is limited by the remoteness of the area; hard to develop transmission methods. No new money or jobs if the lands are closed off.

**Q:** Is it possible that the airport and park and reservoir would be removed if there is a wilderness designation?

**A:** Any stipulations would determine the fate of those developments.

**Q:** Have any constituents voiced concern about dealing with invasive vegetation?

**A:** Yes. The weed control efforts would be starkly limited.

**Q:** One key aspect of looking at this proposal is to have a complete discourse about it. If there is a Presidential Order, it poses a risk of keeping local voices out of the process? The designation of wilderness in Idaho for Owyhee County was the result of having this type of conversation.

**A:** The attitudes of those in Owyhee County may have changed since that designation was made. It took eight years to get it through, to make it final. With a new Secretary, the plan is in place but the funding is not there.

**Q:** The Oregon Hunters Association & Oregon Cattlemen commented. Were there others?

**A:** The Chamber of Commerce and the Ag advisory board.

**COMMENT:** Some experience with wilderness excursions; has seen weed abatement in the Bob Marshall Wilderness, and provisions for the Oregon Badlands to allow Olympic training for sled-dog competition. Each wilderness is unique to the place and people involved, to work out the issues toward collaborative solutions. Mutual efforts go a long way toward making a proposal fit the needs of the people who use an area.

**Q:** The total acreage is 2.1 million, and the roads would be the boundaries. This area has the attention of many people, as it is the biggest potential wilderness area in the contiguous U.S. The great fear is the potential for Presidential Order if no action is completed before the current Administration's term is over. Do you think it's a good idea for all stakeholders to talk about a proposal and help shape the final proposal?

**A:** The constituent concerns will need to be addressed in whatever proposal goes forward.

**COMMENT:** ONDA has stated that current livestock use would be grandfathered into any Wilderness Act. A Monument designation could jeopardize that.

**Q:** Has the process been initiated by ONDA yet?

**A:** The Judge and ONDA have discussed their idea, but no formal process has begun.

**Q:** Are there any written proposals?

**A:** No

**Q:** Do you think Harney County Judge Grasty has any second thoughts about the Steens collaboration?

**A:** Not sure; they haven't had that conversation.

**Q:** Has there been talk in Malheur County about how to avoid a monument designation?

**A:** Yes; specifically with the Owyhee County residents in Idaho. Judge Joyce recommends talking to Bob Skinner and Mr. Hanley.

**Q:** Was the wilderness in Owyhee County designated by Congress? How did the Secretary change what was passed by Congress?

**A:** It was an Executive Order that affected implementation.

### ***Litigation and Energy Updates from Federal Officials:***

#### **Burns:**

No new litigation for Burns. The two ongoing projects are the North Steens Ecosystem Restoration Project and the Steens Travel Management Plan. Negotiations have ceased on North Steens; awaiting judicial determination on Steens. On Andrews/Steens RMP, the judge ruled for BLM and appeal was denied.

Energy projects: most active right now is the North Steens, with FEIS right about the end of May. Many meetings with FWS and the proponent, largely focused on the golden eagle. ROD will be issued after 30 days or more. The Glass Buttes Geothermal plant would have activity on the Burns side and on the Prineville side. They will conduct a joint EA with two decision records. District will be having a pre-application meeting for a wind farm on the Pueblo site. Horizon Energy has had MET Towers up for about three years, but the site is in Core Habitat that was entirely burned over. Buckskin site will be installing MET towers very soon. Celatom mine expansion draft EIS was released April 8, 2011, proposing 2-3 more open pit mines for exploration. Project would add 1300-1400 more acres on BLM.

District has been busy working with the SMAC on the Steens Recreation Plan, including four alternatives. They recently released the EA for gathering Kiger and Riddle Mountain wild horse herds. That gather is intended for this fall. Moon Reservoir upgrades were finished; some work awaits a break in the weather. District discussed with the Oregon National Guard about the potential for a gunnery range for 50-caliber weapons near Burns

**Q:** Is that gunnery range going to be open to the public when not in use by the Guard?

**A:** They may make frequent use of it, but details have not been set. It might be large enough to require that the BLM prepare a land withdrawal so Department of the Army would control use.

**Q:** Is all of the celatom mine on BLM, or is some on State lands?

**A:** The EIS is for the BLM portion; the proponent also has to deal with Division of State Land.

**Q:** How many horses are in long-term holding?

**A:** About 37,000. There are about 350 in the Oregon Wild Horse Corrals

**Malheur NF**

Working with ONDA on litigation there. Travel management: developed four alternatives, from ‘no change’ to limits to any cross-country. Expect an August date for selection of a preferred alternative. Ready with the Draft EIS on the Blue Mountain plan.

**Lakeview:**

Working on the Lakeview RMP amendment, to meet the court agreement with ONDA. Jointly worked with the Vale District to develop plans that meet the agreement. Project scoping report should be ready for publication at the start of summer, and hope to have draft EIS out in early autumn. Work on the Ruby Pipeline is ready to resume, as weather permits. Anticipate that this segment may be completed by the end of this summer. Warner Wetlands litigation ruled in favor of the BLM. The agency does not have to forfeit water rights. The Horseshoe Pasture EA was appealed; Lakeview District continues to work with attorneys. Lakeview Biomass plant is on hold due to weather. Its economic feasibility has been affected by increases in fuel costs.

Shared dispatch center is being analyzed, to serve multiple agencies. If the decision is made in favor of a single site, then agencies would need to determine where it would be located. Still considering renewable energy sources for the Interagency Fire Center.

Aero Power has applied to test an area in the Abert Rim area for wind energy. Oregon Community Wind has asked to have the project placed on hold for the time being. There has been some interest expressed about geothermal energy in the Lakeview District too.

**Q:** A recent article referenced the possibility that Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) would not be buying wind energy because there is so much water for hydropower this year?

**A:** This **is** an issue; inconsistent energy flows make it difficult to facilitate transmission of power. Most of BPA power is being sold to California markets, so meeting some of Oregon’s parameters cannot easily be done.

**Q:** Is there a method to consolidate the site application process for wind energy?

**A:** There isn’t a structure like the one that exists for oil & gas. The “Opportunity Map” is the avenue that the agency has developed to help steer proposals to areas which would have the least impact and greatest benefit. Most sites in eastern Oregon have one concern or another that would require mitigation measures.

**Q:** How good of a resource is Oregon’s wind potential?

**A:** Most of it is along river courses or on ridge tops – all fault block areas have some potential. Most of the development has been along the Columbia River. Most sites in the rest of Oregon will only provide about nine months of power, and it’s inconsistent.

**Vale:**

The RMP update is tracking appropriately. The Boardman to Hemingway transmission line is the area's major energy effort. A new application for geothermal power is being analyzed, along with a pumped storage hydro project at Lake Owyhee

**\*\*\*ACTION ITEM:** Vale District to invite someone from Owyhee Hydro to talk about their FERC application.

**Q:** Is there ongoing travel management planning for Vale?

**A:** The District prefers to deal with managing travel as part of specific NEPA planning efforts. That allows for assessing the expected need for travel in relation to long-term objectives for a specific area.

**Fremont-Winema:**

The Ruby Pipeline portions on the Forests are completed, and it's been nice to have a break on account of weather. The biomass effort will help the forest do much-needed fuels reduction. The travel management effort on forest has been delayed while map printing is being completed; planning for a large amount of printing in their 2012 budget. The Williams Pipeline will have action that affects several forests & BLM districts. Forests will be coordinating with the Regional Office as energy proposals are submitted.

**COMMENT:** Malheur Lumber Company received a grant for biofuels pellet plant in John Day. It's up and running; the only mill operating in eastern Oregon right now. They also produce bricks, but the main product is Ponderosa and not so much juniper utilization.

**COMMENT:** Glad that Senator Merkeley was able to get a waiver for the EPA issues with the biomass plant. Ms. Scheeler is very happy to be in attendance for him to be able to hear the issues folks are concerned about.

Adjourned @ 4:15 p.m.

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April 29, 2011 Lakeview, OR  
Meeting Minutes*

***RAC Attendees***

| CATEGORY 1 |                       | CATEGORY 2 |                     | CATEGORY 3 |                        |
|------------|-----------------------|------------|---------------------|------------|------------------------|
| X          | <b>Mona Drake</b>     |            | Anne Hiller Clark   | X          | <b>Chad Boyd</b>       |
| X          | <b>Dick Leever</b>    |            | Vacant              |            | Craig Foster           |
|            | Wannie Mackenzie      |            | Vacant              | X          | <b>Stan Shepardson</b> |
| X          | <b>Kevin Peterman</b> |            | Diane Pinney        |            | Vacant                 |
| X          | <b>Jim Walls</b>      | X          | <b>Bill Renwick</b> |            | Vacant                 |

***Quorum: NO***

***RAC Federal Official Attendees:***

| AGENCY            |   | MANAGER                    |  | AGENCY                   |   | MANAGER               |  |
|-------------------|---|----------------------------|--|--------------------------|---|-----------------------|--|
| <b>BLM Burns</b>  | X | <b>Kenny McDaniel</b>      |  | <b>BLM Lakeview</b>      | X | <b>Carol Benkosky</b> |  |
| <b>BLM Vale</b>   | X | <b>Don Gonzalez</b>        |  | <b>Fremont-Winema NF</b> | X | <b>Fred Way</b>       |  |
| <b>Malheur NF</b> | X | <b>Doug Jones (Acting)</b> |  |                          |   |                       |  |

***Visitors:***

**Elizabeth Scheeler (for Sen. Merkeley), Melvin Partin, Matt Little, Chris Hansen**

***Designated Federal Official: Don Gonzalez***

***RAC Chair: Bill Renwick***

***Notetaker: Pam Robbins***

***Facilitator: Mark Wilkening***

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Meeting Called to Order 8:10 a.m.

Housekeeping, introductions and agenda review

Discussion on RAC Role in ONDA’s Proposed Wilderness Request

Yesterday’s discussion got us started, and the perspective of several people was that any move should be locally-driven. One suggestion was that the RAC could be the vehicle for collaborative consideration of all the issues, so that the political leaders and communities can find common ground on what everyone could live with. The key is to reach a full agreement on how people want to proceed.

The Chair expressed a concern that someone needed to be the point person on an effort like this. The effort in Idaho for the Owyhee legislation included a full range of stakeholders. Initial sensing of what RAC members heard from their stakeholders: Kevin (Energy/Minerals) – contacts object to a wilderness, and don’t feel that the RAC should be drawn into development of a wilderness. Mona (Comm’l Recreation/OHV) – polling by email reflected shock that the question would even be asked,

cutting off access to public lands where they've always gone; fear that a heritage is being lost in a period of economic stress on citizens. The OHV community will not support any change in status of those lands. Dick (Transportation/Rights-of-Way) – the limitations to business and the public for economic benefit is not a prudent move. Stan (Public-at-Large) – the effort to establish the Oregon Badlands Wilderness had strong community support and there is likely a support from the Bend area about the concept of protecting open spaces. There is economic value to designating special places, drawing tourists and preserving unique landscapes. Getting a resolution to the WSA issue might be good for everyone. The RAC could be a solid forum for developing the issues that are involved in any wilderness designation. Mike (Environmental Organizations) – RMEF and Backcountry Hunters want to conserve/improve habitat. That is the strongest focus, so considering wilderness would be pointed in that direction. Diane (Wild Horse & Burro) – As long as a proposal does not close out any HMA or impact it negatively, the WHB advocates wouldn't object. Jim (Comm'l Timber) – The stakeholders do not feel the RAC should be the lead on this. Bill (Environmental Organizations) – This effort needs to be driven by local proponents. The RAC could help facilitate the collaborative effort, but it would be a big investment of time and energy. WSAs have different rules than actual wilderness or the varied monuments, and releasing some of these areas could be an outcome of changing land status to wilderness. Chad (Academician) – Concern is being expressed about how agencies would be able to manage invasive species. To get this done, there must be a crisis situation or a high level of trust, and the current situation doesn't seem to bring either. The goal should not be a debate about wilderness, but reaching a point where there is a shared vision for the lands.

Question is: Should the RAC act as the nucleus of discussion of the wilderness proposal?

Q: How would the RAC process work to do this type of thing?

A: It would require meetings on an ongoing basis, and to gather public input, it would require meeting at times the public could come (evenings/weekends).

Q: Isn't the RAC asked to provide advice to the BLM & Forest Service? Wouldn't that mean that the agencies would be the ones to assign this workload?

A: That's right. The agencies assign the workload. This proposal might not be ripe for agency action at this time.

COMMENTS: This group might not function best as a convener or facilitator of a topic like this. There is not a collaborative effort already established that the RAC could help facilitate. It could be misinterpreted that the RAC is promoting wilderness, or cause the members to lose credibility with the range of stakeholder groups.

Update on the BLM Vegetation EIS –Meagan Conry

Powerpoint.

Q: What has been the effect of limiting the use of herbicides over the past 27 years?

A: The four herbicides we CAN use are not always effective on the types of species we most need to treat. The agency is using other methods, but again, it's not doing the job. Some plants are outrunning our capacity to deal with them, such as Medusahead and plants in the mustard family. The injunction allowed BLM to use those four herbicides, but could only be applied to noxious weeds, which doesn't include cheatgrass.

Q: Are the three new herbicides new to the BLM or to the market in general?

A: The aminopyralid is new to the market, but offers great potential. The other two have been used by others, with mixed opinions on their effectiveness.

COMMENT: There is no such thing as a magic bullet for these annual grasses. Looking at why a weed is there in the first place is helpful in understanding the ecological reasons and moving toward a desired state. Implore that the BLM set these tools within an ecological-based program of treatment.

COMMENT: The goal is an integrated treatment of invasive plants.

COMMENT: The RAC provided input for the overall EIS, but was told that the input needed to be directed at the local level. We would like to be sure those comments are included in the final.

Resume Discussion on RAC Role in ONDA's Proposed Wilderness Request

CLARIFICATION: ONDA would like the RAC to consider being the one to invite all interested stakeholders to have a conversation on wilderness and public land management in the Owyhee region. A subgroup could start the discussion, because of the broad-based representation of the member base, and the safe venue for sharing perspectives.

Q: Is it the responsibility of this RAC to take this on?

A: No. The RAC is advisory only, to the Federal managers.

COMMENT: The word "wilderness" may limit the ability to even begin productive discussions.

ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSAL:

Group 1 – No. Discussion points: Are there current critical concerns, and what are they? How are they being addressed? Is there a complete road inventory (a current use)? What about economic/recreational values such as grazing, minerals, biomass, OHV, hunting, fishing, hiking, historical/archaeological exploration, etc.? Would like an independent evaluation of the new wilderness in Idaho, comparing the expectations of the public vs. what was realized at the conclusion of the Owyhee Wilderness designation.

Group 2 – In favor of considering the proposal. Discussion points: Would like data (not concepts) on ecosystem condition (weeds, etc); roads (all types); Greater sage grouse areas; mineral & energy claims and proposals; cultural, scenic, and wilderness values; water (seasonality & access); grazing allotments, private, and in common; herd management areas; OHV use (current usage, problem areas, conflicting uses); and the drivers and priorities for ONDA’s effort.

Group 3 – No to the present question; possibly willing to participate if the question is reframed to the broader question of desired goals for the land base. Discussion points: Wildlife habitat condition (to maximize species diversity) will require monitoring and assessment; socio-economic issues; and retaining the flexibility to adapt management direction to account for climate change.

DISCUSSION: It may be worth asking County officials and others in Malheur County if they see a role for the RAC in this issue as it takes shape.

Q: What would the groups who are opposed to the subject need to see happen for them to be willing to proceed?

A: Remove the assumption that wilderness is the only possible outcome. For it to be collaborative, all options need to be on the table.

Q: Should a letter be sent that delineates the decision of the RAC and the basis for the decision not to be the facilitator of these discussions?

Q: Can we get a report from people within the Owyhee Initiative area as to how the implementation of that legislation is working; how those lands are doing?

Q: Where does ONDA see this going from here?

A: A possible letter to stakeholders might be a good start to find out what role they would see the RAC taking in the discussions. Having a conversation about public land management in this area is important to everyone.

DFO COMMENT: Make this a standing topic for the SEORAC, with briefings on the status of the Owyhee Country from specialists in the area. Wondering about what the RAC letter would say, and who it would go to. The Vale District has been doing their wilderness characteristics inventory for the current plan. The DFO would want the RAC to contribute their insights on what to do with those areas that meet wilderness characteristics.

The RAC role should be to focus on the over-arching goals for the land, and what it takes to get there. Sharing information is essential for all viewpoints on the topic. A letter should: 1) identify that the question was asked of the SEORAC to facilitate. 2) RAC decided it is not appropriate for them to take a lead role, as it needs to be locally driven. 3) Provide an informational foundation for what the RAC is doing: declined to take the role as the facilitator, but recognize that this will be a topic of consideration for people in the area. 4) Ask - Would your group be willing to participate in a collaborative process? If

not, what would you need to be involved, and what role (if any) do you think the SEORAC should play in a collaborative process? Who else would you recommend to convene such a collaborative?

*****ACTION ITEM:** Respond directly to ONDA about their proposal.

*****ACTION ITEM:** Determine if we need a subcommittee that is engaged in this topic to keep the RAC apprised of progress of other key players.

*****ACTION ITEM:** Develop a standing agenda item for Vale specialists to brief the RAC on the status of the Owyhee area, covering all key aspects.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD: Questions held by member of the public have already been addressed. No need to address the RAC.

Election of Officers No quorum – deferred to next meeting.

Subgroup meeting recap

Group I

What are the critical concerns in the area, and are managers addressing them?

Road inventory

Economic values (grazing, minerals, biomass

Recreational values (OHV, Historic, hunting, hiking, camping)

Independent evaluation of the Idaho side where wilderness has been designated, as compared to expectations of the public vs. what was realized at the conclusion of the designation.

Group II

Drive the topics toward data as opposed to opinions

Need maps that relate ecosystem composition, roads, cultural values, water, roads, grazing, HMAs,

What are the drivers or motivation from ONDA to do this now

User conflicts

Field visits to truly assess

Group III

Wildlife habitat condition, species diversity, what is the monitoring status, frequency, and responsiveness to findings

Socio-economic issues

Adapting management actions to climate change impacts

The response to the letter from the RAC will guide what the next steps are for the RAC. The next RAC meeting is in proximity to the project, so we can spend up to two hours getting a full update on the status of wilderness characteristics

Roundtable:

Kevin Peterman: The draft EIS on the Celatom mine expansion – it’s a huge operation, might be worth viewing. The Eagle Pitcher Company has gotten an award for reclamation of their lands. There is a huge mass of material removed and when reclaimed, it may not have much visible ground disturbance. He’s impressed with the number of energy proposals that the agencies are sorting through; many of those don’t come to fruition, but the workload is still there.

Mona Drake: On Memorial Day, there will be a work day Christmas Valley sand dunes to clear trash, construct border fencing, and improve the site. In June, they will have a competition that the public can participate in or attend as observers. Copies of the GAO report on OHV in Oregon were distributed. It’s important to get a good understanding of the OHV community. Distributing spill kits to users.

Dick Leever: Quiet in transportation. Recently met with the FRE-WIN to discuss their travel management plan. Struggling to get their maps out for Phase I, so users can know what places are useable. Hoping to have an area set aside for OHV use, or possibly a trail that crosses an area with support community. Polling users for input on how that would work. Hoping for meetings by mid-June.

Stan Shepardson: First meeting, and enjoyed getting to know everybody. Look forward to future meetings and topics.

Mike King: Good to be here. Frustrated that the topics are pretty fuzzy at this point. Would like to have some definition where topics are a bit more concrete, and you can define when you’re done.

Jim Walls: Energy proposals that are not viable should not be taking agency time to be considered. It is disturbing that they can’t refuse to evaluate prospects that are not feasible or could not be implemented. Lakeview is proud to be in the running for All-American City.

Bill Renwick: Steens was a topic during this meeting, and the progress on the CMPA and the SMAC’s work has been a benefit for Harney County. They just had their first meeting of 2011 last month, and are dealing with one contentious issue, but other areas of their purview has progressed smoothly. In recent terms, they’ve been able to resolve some issues.

Chad Boyd: Hope the RAC can define a role if they have one to play in the Owyhee proposals. Having some clarity about that will help greatly.

Recreation RAC Status Update –Pam Robbins

Agenda items for next meeting: June 14-15 @ Ontario, OR

Owyhee proposal

Veg EIS Stepdown

North Steens Transmission

Geothermal site

B2H

Dredging – Malheur Queen or Mormon Basin

Meeting Evaluation

Great meeting; much information; good input on topics;

Need clarification on how the group votes on topics – are there guidelines?

Adjourned @ 12:00 p.m.

*****ACTION ITEM:** Post minutes from previous meetings.

*****ACTION ITEM:** Vale District to invite someone from Owyhee Hydro to talk about their FERC application.

*****ACTION ITEM:** Respond directly to ONDA about their proposal.

*****ACTION ITEM:** Draft letter will be circulated to RAC members for input.

*****ACTION ITEM:** Draft letter to key constituents and circulate for RAC member feedback. This letter would go to RAC members to distribute to people in their interest areas.

*****ACTION ITEM:** Develop a standing agenda item for Vale specialists to brief the RAC on the status of the Owyhee area, covering all key aspects.

Bill Renwick

RAC Chair

Donald N. Gonzalez

Designated Federal Officer