

**Outfitter / User Meeting Notes**  
**January 26, 2012**  
**10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. PST**

**Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Medford District, Grants Pass Resource Area (Video Conference):** Katrina Symons, Field Manager; Jorgena Daly, Acting Assistant Field Manager for Recreation (notetaker); Dave Ballenger, Outdoor Recreation Planner/Scenic Easements; Barbara Zurhellen, Commercial Permit Administrator; Becky Brown, Rand Visitor's Center Manager; Shawn Clark, Maintenance Manager; Todd Calvert, Park Ranger

**United States Forest Service (FS) Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest, Gold Beach Ranger District (Video Conference):** Alan Vandiver, Gold Beach District Ranger; Nancy Schwieger, Supervisory Natural Resource Specialist, and April Sanders, River Permit Manager, Gold Beach Ranger District

**Facilitator:** Karen Bolda

**Video Conference Participants and Office:**

Siuslaw NF: Jerry Malloy, Brian Hardenburger, John Sterner, Jan Bottjer, Murray Johnson, Robert Griffiths, Paula Minear, Russ Thomas, & George Stratten  
Columbia River Gorge: Zach Collier & Gary Schoenecker  
Grants Pass Interagency Office: Ray Hanson, Lowell Pratt, Amy Grieve, Vernon Grieve, Scott Malone, Cecil Lesley, Ray Tharp, Ed Chapman, Mike Cooley, & Mike Slagle  
Ocala NF: Michael Greenbaum

**Dial-in Participants:** Bruce Ray, Peter Grubb, Eric Weiseth, Jared Wika, Jake Szympruch, & Drew Neilson

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## **I. Introductions**

- Each location identified where they were and who was present.
- Names and email addresses of those in attendance from each location can be sent to [bzurhell@blm.gov](mailto:bzurhell@blm.gov) to be added to the mailing list.

## **II. Ground Rules (Karen)**

- This meeting will be tricky to make sure everyone is heard with live, video, and phone.
- Everyone was asked that whenever they spoke to identify themselves, to turn off any disruptive devices like cell phones, and to keep side conversations to a minimum. Use mute when possible.
- It was suggested to call out "Karen I want to make a comment" if anyone wanted to get into the conversation.

## **III. Purpose of the Meeting (Katrina/Alan)**

- Consider Fall Meeting format change from the Nov 2011 and apply this technique into the future.
- Reminded attendees of issues raised at last Nov 2011 meeting and the purpose of this meeting today includes: 1) a report on those issues, 2) the mutual problem solving that has occurred since and the issues that were raised, 3) what decisions have been made on the issues, and 4) which issues will still require more discussion and clarification. The goal is to: Implement, Evaluate, Adapt
- It is great that we are all here and connected via this technology.

#### IV. Human Waste in the Rogue River Canyon (Becky)

- BLM/FS agency intent is to have no human waste or toilet paper in the Rogue River Canyon.
- We want to make sure that our intent is clear and understandable.
- Reviewed the current expectation/description of the 30-minute rule.
- Mentioned that the agency has received comments about the 30-minute rule being too restrictive, not solving the problem, and creating unnecessary animosity and lunch stop competition.
- The agencies have discussed what we can do and propose the following change for this season:

*Human Waste Removal System (HWRS): Wild Rogue boaters are required to use either a government provided outhouse or an approved HWRS to dispose of all solid human waste in the river canyon, year round.*

*An approved HWRS must be watertight and readily available for use or show throughout the day. HWRS must be set-up within 30 minutes when arriving at camp except for those locations described in the Portable Toilet Guide. The HWRS must be a dedicated system and cannot be used to store supplies. Disposal of solid human waste in other than an approved HWRS or government outhouse is prohibited.*

*Set-up means the HWRS must be out of the boat, easily accessible for everyone in the group, and away from the central camp area. The HWRS must be large enough to accommodate the entire group for the entire length of the trip, including lodge and self-support kayak trips.*

*Plastic bag liners are not acceptable, with the exception of the following approved solid human waste pouches; Cleanwaste WAG bags and RESTOP 2 bags. Used bags must be packed-out in an approved watertight container. Portable toilets with snap-on lids, such as ammo cans, are required to have a rubber gasket on the lid. Snap-on lids are no longer acceptable with the bucket type removal systems, with some pre-approved exceptions. Buckets are acceptable but must have a lid that is easy to remove and replace on the bucket. Portable RV-type toilets are not acceptable.*

*If a group is split up during the day, each subgroup must have a toilet with the required capacity for the number of people in that subgroup. To calculate the volume required for your group size, use one pint per person per day or for bag systems use one use per person per day. For example, a group of 10 people on a 4-day trip requires 40 uses/pints, at 8 pints per gallon; the group needs 5 gallons of storage capacity. Cleanwaste WAG bags and RESTOP 2 bags are calculated at 4 uses per bag. In the example of 10 people on a 4-day trip, the formula would be 40 uses divided by 4 uses per bag; the group needs 10 bags and 5 gallons of storage capacity to store the used bags. The total HWRS capacity must be presented at the visitor center during check-in.*

- The toilet guide was discussed briefly.
- **Everyone was asked to submit, in writing, specific input on the toilet guide by March 5, 2012, and to let us know by COB February 6, 2012 if the HWRS guidance above and in the handout that was distributed is CLEAR AND UNDERSTANDABLE. Email comments to [bzurhell@blm.gov](mailto:bzurhell@blm.gov).**
- After we implement these changes this 2012 season, we would again like to revisit this topic at the fall 2012 meeting and discuss how it worked.
- The BLM plans to have a Leave No Trace Rogue River video on website this year and more educational materials available. We have heard that we need more information for hikers and we plan to provide more information to hikers.
- The Forest Service is doing a visitor survey in 2012
- Will be handing out wag bags and we are going to evaluate how this season goes and look for feedback in the fall 2012.
- SCAT machine. FS is looking at what we can do with SCAT machines and tokens in the future and would like to have people be more inclined to use it.

#### Comments/Questions

- There is an inconsistency in the guide about “except in these locations...” when those locations are listed on the portable toilet guide.
- Agreed that a lot of thought went into what was addressed from fall meeting.

- About disposable toilet systems. Contacted Curry Transfer and Recycling in regard to Foster Bar and if wag bags reach more than 5% waste, they're not supposed to go into landfill. How close are you coming to the limit of the wag bags now? Response: Rand did an informal survey at visitor center about what people are using for waste and the results indicated we were at less than 1%.

## **V. Bear Camp (April)**

- Update regarding concern that we weren't communicating Bear Camp Road closures. Keep in mind that websites can only be updated if we get the information. Please remember to let FS or BLM know if you are out there and notice anything. Information will be posted on website and there will be press releases, etc. Folks at Rand will have info as well as at front desks at Gold Beach and Grants Pass. Please let us know if you see anything out there.
- Snow Plowing on Bear Camp Rd – this year, 2012, probably not a problem to fund the snow plowing, there might be problems in future years depending upon snowfall and when the road can actually get plowed. If we get to a bad snow year and need a lot of money to do the work, we really need your thoughts on how we can do it. We would like your ideas for solutions and to understand how it will affect your business.

### **Comments/Questions**

- We start using the road as early as May 5. I was under the understanding that my user fees were set aside for that purpose. Response – yes, user fees are used by the FS but not by the BLM.
- Years ago before agency used fees, the local businessmen used to provide that service.

## **VI. Rogue River Ranch Vehicle Parking (Todd)**

- Shared his story about reading a newspaper article that was published about the Ranch and there was a vehicle in the photo that he didn't appreciate seeing and can understand and relate to other's point of view in this matter.
- An action that the BLM is committed to is to make sure caretakers park in a different place that is screened from view from river.
- The road to the Ranch is a designated backcountry byway and Rogue River Ranch is a place people want to visit. It is a recreation site where vehicles do need to park and there will be times when vehicles are in view. The site is open to rafters and vehicle traffic.
- We have to do a site management plan and at that point we will consider vegetative screening.

### **Comments/Questions**

- I really appreciate the solution. The issue was the caretaker's car as being most visible but I understand that others users go there as it is a recreation site, but working with the caretakers will help.

## **VII. Penalties Revisions (Barbara)**

- In both our commercial and noncommercial operating plans there is guidance for FS and BLM in regard to permit violations list. Some are outdated, some are not equal or fair between commercial and noncommercial.
- We are going to take a look at the plans and try to aim for parity between the two. We would like input and suggestions about what you think is not fair or equal.
- We will send out a list of the violations and penalties to you that you can provide input on and will have those in place for the 2013 season.

## **VIII. Small Start Camp/Lodge Split (Dave)**

- Some background on topic: there have been requests from different groups to split their small starts where part stays at lodge, part camps out.

- The BLM and FS want to hear compelling arguments in favor or against small start/camp lodge splits. We want to avoid unintended consequences.
- Primary objective is to protect the natural and cultural resources on the river and the visitor's recreational experience. There will be no changes for the 2012 season.
- Throughout the 2012 season, please think about the following specific questions and bring us your substantive comments and suggestions to the Fall 2012 meeting. Anyway that you can get your ideas and experience to us would be useful.
  - What campsites would be used in conjunction with each lodge?
  - Would this increase campsite competition, especially near the lodges?
  - Would there be increased resource impacts?
  - How would the two groups regroup the next day?
  - Would private groups be allowed to do camp/ lodge splits also?
  - Could this develop into a third split of the group due to rabbit boating?
  - How would River Rangers handle compliance? Our current model or foundational experience is that groups travel together... both private and commercial users are required to stay together at night. How should we define a group on the Rogue River and how should they stay together?
  - How would allowing group splits affect the recreational experience? Would we end up with more or less groups, more/less campsite competition, think it out, reason it though, ensure there are no unintended consequences.

#### Comments/Questions

- I don't feel that a campsite near a lodge isn't really a problem.... You use a smaller campsite and have less impact on toilets and the camp. You meet up in the morning and move out shortly after.
- If you have those campsites close to lodges – when would someone assign campgrounds? We don't want campsite assignment to happen – opposed to it.
- Is this an established policy now that people can split and go to lodge and camp?
- Who is pushing for this change?
- It is not allowed for small starts and already in place for large commercial starts
- How did that split come to be? Private boaters don't have that opportunity, but commercial does?
- What would prevent someone from not wanting to split up and go to two different campsites? This split favors commercial passengers and increases financial profits. Why don't you consider allowing all groups to do this and forget about the lodge concept? You are showing favoritism. What if private boaters want to split, but don't have the money to do it?
- Have you ever handed out citations for this problem?

#### Agency response

- Current policy does not allow a group to split. Everyone in a group needs to be at lodge together or camp together.
- The request originated out of commercial groups, but we have also heard private boaters support it.
- Commercial outfitters can split a large (20+) start and run two separate trips and BLM treats them as two separate trips.
- There was one time where we found the group split and the private party leader did receive a citation.
- It will be good for us to consider how we handle compliance.

### **IX. Campsite Competition (Alan)**

- Our intent is to protect natural and cultural resources as well as the visitor experience.
- We need a lot of ideas on what people think about campsite competition.
- This year we intend to keep whiteboard going at Rand.
- **If you have any suggestions for improvement of the Wild Rogue Campsite brochure please email comments to Barbara at [bzurhell@blm.gov](mailto:bzurhell@blm.gov) by COB March 5, 2012.**

- We want input from users every way that we can. FS is doing a National Visitor Use Monitoring study this year and we'll see what information we might get from that.
- Suggestions will be taken at Rand, Foster Bar, and online. In the input you provide for us, include your rationale as much as possible.
- While we're on river, we'll have specific questions about campsite competition and hear what people have to say.

#### Comments/Questions

- I am a private boater entirely in favor of removing all toilets in the river – replace with privacy screen.
- I urge you not to think of it as an increased demand problem – it is a supply problem with impact to campsites.
- I recommend looking at marginal areas where you can enlarge large sites more, or make a new site out of impacted areas (mule creek, cape coma, Hewitt creek – no more with high water '97) you all know the sandbars that have come/gone over years. Get volunteers, I would volunteer.
- In the past we proposed campsite reservation system and now I've backed off that solution. There are a lot of problems with it. I agree with others to remove all the toilets and that would reduce competition at large sites. The campsite competition problem has always been there. What happens is in those high water years we get new sand and new campsites.
- What worked on Deschutes – they identified all campsites and marked them with colored tags. There are sometimes new boaters that are not familiar with river... they don't know they pass right by camps, etc. this would help new people know where they are at.
- I know of three wilderness areas that have marked posts where they want people to camp, especially for those sites not close to or visible from river
- We talked about this a few years ago, using colors to color code by size of site that is a minimally invasive site size marker.
- This might help to lessen the animosity.
- Should teach at Rand that the public has the right that any group can take any section of any camp. People should know that you can legally share campgrounds and we should encourage it. Everybody has an equal right to any part of those equal beach sites. Instead of privatization with reservations, we must share our public lands.
- Seems like the competition for campsites revolves around toilets, how about if you add more toilets...

## X. Bin Items (Nancy)

### A. Non-Regulated Use Season

- Don't know how many people are putting in – we want to get more data one week before and one week after the permit season. Volunteer self-registration would help.

#### Comments/Questions

- Make self-registration permits mandatory.
- If we do that, knowing our rental business – two weeks before/after would better.  
Agency response:
- Sharing rental numbers would also help fill the data gap, thank you.

### B. Dogs in the Canyon

- Start looking at impact of dogs in canyon.
- We will educate users on dog waste removal system. Will also be available on the trail, Grave Creek, Foster Bar.

#### Comments/Questions

- I always take a dog on river trip, controlling dogs sale pitch should relate to spread of poison oak.

### **C. Fatalities at Blossom Bar**

- Talked to marine deputies and there is no data that linked time & river flow, we only know anecdotally that there may be problems around at least 3,000 cfs.
- Recommendation is always scout Blossom.

#### Comments/Questions

- A reputable outfitter told Jan that in the early '70's that the horn rock going into Blossom – took measurement that documents from 37 feet to 15 feet that reduces passageway – would FS or BLM be able to take measurements and monitor hydrologic flow?
- Suggestion to compare old photos of rock to current ones.

### **D. Rogue River Trail**

- BLM & FS do not have funds to monitor trail in Fiscal Year 12. FS will ask Brushy Bar to keep track of how many folks they see. Will put together a monitoring plan and request funding to implement in 2013.
- New trail book available with updated Leave No Trace information.

### **E. Dangerous Shuttle Drivers**

- Safety will be addressed as part of getting shuttle companies under permit. The process will begin in 2012 with implementation in 2013.
- Call 911 if you find someone who is dangerous and driving poorly. We have some BLM and FS law enforcement, but they would have to be in the right place at the right time.

#### Comments/Questions

- Driving badly is an arbitrary concept.
- If you are going to license shuttle drivers, what will you charge them for the license?
- This was established in the 1940's that anyone who did business on public land had to have permit. Do you know of anywhere else that charges arbitrarily?
- Seems like they charge extra, do you know of any other places that charge extra? Why are you charging extra?

#### Agency response:

- Current policy directs that if anyone is doing commercial business on public land they need to be under Outfitting and Guiding permit. Shuttle drivers will be under two different scenarios pertaining to cost and there are two different ways the FS charges fees.
- BLM policy is similar regarding commercial operations on public land but their fee structure is different.
- BLM and FS will begin figuring this out over the next year and hope to implement a joint shuttle company permit system in 2013.
- We have direction to put commercial uses under permit and we will follow direction
- We have clear direction on how to charge fees. We need to consider both sets of regulation and policy for both BLM and FS. Information will be forthcoming over the next few months and will keep folks advised.
- This topic will be picked up in future meetings.

### **F. Mule Creek Trail**

- SCA crew did work last summer. Took out logs, did minor trail maintenance.
- We will continue historic maintenance schedule – funding permitting.

### **G. Bear Fences**

- We will continue to promote use of fences for safety.

- We have Memorandum of Understanding with Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife to provide bear fences, boxes, etc.
- Bear observation forms will continue to be handed out and collected. We will report back at the Fall meeting.

## **XI. Annual Outfitter/User Spring & Fall Meetings**

### **2012 Spring Meeting (Katrina)**

Katrina

- At the Fall 2011 meeting we envisioned that we would have a follow-up meeting, which is today's meeting.
- We also thought there would be a need for a Spring 2012 meeting – but we've received input that the issues are not pressing enough to justify a spring meeting.
- What are your thoughts after talking today? Is it essential for us to have a Spring meeting or would the Fall work?

Comments/Questions

- Thank you for making this happen. I don't think a spring meeting is absolutely essential, but the communication is incredible. I recognize it is a lot of work, and a fall meeting would also work.
- We've gone to spring meetings with Prineville BLM because Fall meetings are prone to poor weather-driving. It is better weather-wise for us to make the meetings.
- Thanks for enabling remote participation. If there are significant changes, then a Spring meeting would make sense.
- Would like to continue the spring meeting
- I cannot answer whether we should have a Spring meeting, thank you for having meeting today
- This forum allows for more input and discussion. I would recommend we have a meeting in the fall that is conducive to issue resolution.

Agency response:

- I heard that there isn't a pressing enough issue to have a Spring meeting, but we need to continue this good dialogue.
- There will be some changes in leadership at BLM and this is Katrina's last meeting as she accepted another position with the BLM in Roseburg. BLM recreation staff is also down by two positions currently.
- It takes a lot of time and effort to put together a successful meeting. We want to focus on continuing communication over the field season and post information on web and receiving your comments/input that we can work on at our Fall meeting.

### **Format Annual Fall Meeting (Katrina)**

- We are proposing a new format for the Fall 2012 meeting with issue resolution/small work groups like in 2011. The fall meeting will have the first segment dedicated to Permittees that will address commercial permittee specific issues. The second segment will be opened up to all users.
- Working in small work groups will help provide consistency and value-added input. We want to continue to work together and move forward with getting resolution to issues.

Questions/Comments

- Two separate meetings being norm because?
- Why do assume that the public has no right to attend a meeting with outfitters?
- Facilitator - "rephrasing that, I heard you say that you would like to have her open up the first part of the meeting?"
- Agency needs to take great pains at involving all in decisions.
- This comment relates to person who feels that we (outfitters) talk about secretive stuff. Proposes that this person attends the outfitter meeting to listen only, not participate.
- I don't see how you can shut something like that off to the public, it is not right.

- I don't believe that not everything or the tone in which you discuss it shows up in meeting minutes.
- There are some things that might be confidential and it would be in your interest to have legal Counsel explain why you cannot disclose information from those meetings.
- I don't have any issues with full public participation... frankly those meetings are boring, it's all public information and minutes are posted. Shows a bias to suggest that tone or accuracy of minutes are not accurate.

Agency response:

- Previous format was one meeting for commercial outfitters in the morning and one for private users in the evening. The proposed change is having a short agency/outfitter meeting to discuss permit specific issues followed by a combined outfitter/user meeting.
- There really is a line drawn in the sand because we/agency have a contractual relationship with our permit holders, our relationship is unique.
- Reminded everyone that we did post minutes of the outfitter meeting this year, it's not a secret

### **Date for 2012 Fall Meeting (Katrina)**

- Does the first week in Nov work for everyone?

Comments/Questions

- No, not for me. I like this format, but hope for an in-person meeting because of the value of face-to-face meetings.
- I live seven hours away and would prefer to teleconference or video conference – you can go to Placerville or the Supervisors Office.
- I could make it work.

Agency response:

- Does the week of Veteran's Day holiday work? – yes this works.
- Sounded like in-person meeting is preferred, but available video/teleconference is good.
- In person is more effective due to the small work group format.
- I see better participation with the non-commercial side with this meeting format.

Questions/Comments

- We have nine people in room that are private boaters calling in from a remote location. Would like to be able to continue to participate either by phone or video conference.
- Suggestion was made to poll private boaters.
- I'm not a "private" boater, I'm a "Public Recreational River User" not 'private' – that is an offensive term.
- I have an issue that hasn't been raised – I'm a private boater and do three trips/year on the Rogue. Great Rand visitor service, except with call-in cancellation system because we have to be camped out on the phone for 45-minutes at a time. Don't do all initial permit requirements in initial phone call, but handle this later in the morning with a call-back.

### **XII. Wrap Up (Alan/Katrina/Karen)**

- Thank you for your time, comments and passion for the river resources.
- Barbara, April, and the rest of the staff did a ton of work.
- When we meet, we need to have meaningful stuff on the table and continue to move forward.
- This conference telephone and video feed work has been effective.
- Please get your input to Barbara.
- If you have concerns at any time, bring them up – make us aware of them and we will act upon it as quickly as we can.
- Closed meeting at 12:03 p.m.