

MINUTES
Alaska Resource Advisory Council Meeting
Alaska State Office ~ Anchorage, AK
October 14-15, 2004

Thursday, October 14, 2004

Council members present:

Greg Beischer
Charlie Boddy
Tom Crafford, Chair
Randy Frank
Sandra Key
June McAtee
Suzanne McCarthy
Susan Olsen
Jim Posey
Larry Taylor
Keith Tryck
David van den Berg
Evie Witten

BLM representatives present:

Henri Bisson, State Director
George Oviatt, Associate State Director
June Bailey, Anchorage Field Office
Ramone McCoy, Glennallen Field Office
Bob Schneider, Northern Field Office
Scott Billing, Alaska Fire Service
Colleen McCarthy, Minerals
Debbie Hollen, Resources
John Payne, Resources
David Sileo, Support Services
Jody Weil, External Affairs
Teresa McPherson, External Affairs

Council members absent:

Phil Driver
Teresa Imm

Chair Tom Crafford called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

The chair opened the meeting and welcomed new members. He asked all members to introduce themselves and the interests they represent, and encouraged new members to bring this issues and concerns to future agendas. The council reviewed and accepted the meeting agenda.

State Director's Update

State Director Henri Bisson welcomed new members and thanked them for joining the RAC. He said serving on the RAC provides insight into the complexity of BLM's work in Alaska.

- BLM interpretive mural: Bisson noted a new BLM mural at Ted Stevens International Airport featuring a color photo of the Brooks Range. The mural is part of an interpretive display in terminal C inviting people to visit BLM-managed public lands.
- 2004 fire season: BLM and state land managers faced difficult decisions this past summer due to the fire season. One of those decisions involved carrying out a planned prescribed fire

at Alphabet Hills in the Glennallen area in late summer. Some residents questioned the decision due to smoke and health concerns from other fires in the state. The burn was successful and removed about 40,000 acres of fuel. BLM will meet with DNR soon to talk about smoke issues and impacts to local economies during fire season.

- Northwest National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska: BLM sold leases for 1.4 million acres totaling \$54 million during the June lease sale in the northwest portion of the petroleum reserve. No surface disturbing activities will occur until the judge renders a decision on the appeal filed earlier this year.
- Northeast National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska: BLM is amending the 1998 plan for the northeast corner of the petroleum reserve. This amendment could make an additional 387,000 million acres available for leasing. The preferred alternative could result in 2.1 billion barrels of economically recoverable oil.

BLM received 214,000 comments, most via web; about 50 were substantive comment. Bisson said all comments are valuable, but stressed this is not a voting exercise. BLM will release the final plan in late November and will issue a decision in January 2005, following a 30-day review. Bisson said this decision will generate controversy, but said it's important to consider national energy needs during North Slope planning.

Bisson and the RAC talked about management options BLM could use to protect sensitive areas, such as a ten-year deferral for the lake area and other restrictions to protect resources while allowing management flexibility.

- Alpine Satellite Development: ConocoPhillips proposed building five pads, two of which are in the petroleum reserve. BLM is working on a record of decision now that will employ new standards to protect subsistence resources. The most controversial aspect is the proposed bridge, which is not on BLM lands.
- S. 1466: Linda Resseguie said the bill passed the Senate Oct. 10. It's uncertain whether the House will pick it up when they reconvene Nov. 15. There were many changes from the original version. The biggest change concerned expediting the opening of ANCSA "d-1" lands. The new language is open-ended and calls for a report to Congress within 18 months of passage of those lands that would be opened to appropriation under public land laws, and requires public notice and comment. Resseguie and Bisson invited the RAC to participate in the report, and suggested this be included in the RAC's 2005 work plan.

Some RAC members said they supported an accelerated approach to land transfer but had concerns about the land exchange provisions in the bill. Resseguie noted these also had been modified from earlier versions, and said she would provide the RAC copies of the version that passed.

- Recordable Disclaimers of Interest: BLM has issued a couple decisions on the State's applications; others are being reviewed by the Solicitor. BLM expects to issue additional disclaimers shortly, and doesn't expect objections to those decisions.

- Alaska Native consultation: At an earlier RAC meeting, Bisson said he referred to an OMB decision that provided guidance for consulting with Alaska Native corporations on the same basis as tribes. This guidance was apparently specific to OMB. BLM routinely consults with both Native corporations and tribes. However, consulting solely with Native corporations does not fulfill the requirement for tribal consultation whenever policies or actions have substantial direct effects on tribes.
- Natural gas pipeline: Colleen McCarthy said the recently passed gas pipeline bill was a good beginning, but still does not provide the incentives industry needs to make a gas pipeline commercially viable. McCarthy summarized the main points of the bill.

Field Manager Updates

Ramone McCoy, Glennallen Field Office

- GFO is analyzing comments to develop a preferred alternative for the draft East Alaska RMP by the end of 2004. The final EIS and RMP should be completed by fall 2005.
- The Alphabet Hills prescribed burn met objectives. About 41,000 acres burned in a mosaic, and will result in enhanced wildlife habitat and reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire in the future. GFO is mapping ice patches adjacent to the burn to monitor effects of soot and ash deposition.
- GFO issued approximately 900 permits for the 2004 subsistence moose hunt in the Glennallen area.
- Trails Unlimited is helping with rehab work following the 2004 fire season.

June Bailey, Anchorage Field Office

- Bailey announced she had been selected as field manager for the Lewiston Field Office in Montana and would be leaving at the end of the year.
- AFO has worked on several items/issues since the RAC's July 2004 Unalakleet field tour.
 - BLM and the Native Village of Unalakleet signed a memorandum of understanding formalizing the way the two government entities conduct business.
 - BLM notified heirs of both the Ryan cabin and the mink farm that they could continue casual use of the sites on a temporary seasonal basis. BLM also contracted with the village to clean up the cabin site.
- AFO continues work on the Ring of Fire RMP. The draft will be available for public comment in Jan. 2005.
- BLM published a notice of intent to begin planning for the Bay RMP/EIS. BLM will begin public scoping in local communities in the Bristol Bay area in Nov.
- AFO installed interpretive display panels at an historic Tlingit blockhouse in Sitka in Sept.

RAC Chairs' Conference, May 2004

Tom Crafford gave a summary of the chair's conference with the Director held in May 2004. A major topic at the conference was the role of RACs during RMP planning. This role varies by state; some are more involved than others. Other issues included travel management and OHV issues and wildland fire planning.

BREAK

Outgoing RAC member Gary “Gus” Gustafson welcomed new RAC members. He commended the RAC for its spirit of cooperation and skill at consensus making, and said the RAC had grown as an advisory body since its early years. Where the RAC once struggled to find a purpose, today the RAC has a more definitive role and process for involvement in BLM’s work. He urged members to make meetings and field tours and to get involved in subgroups and issues of importance to them.

The chair and Henri Bisson commended Gustafson for his vision and leadership during his seven years on the RAC.

Annual field tours

The group viewed a short slide show of the RAC’s Unalakleet field tour, and talked about the importance of making time to participate in annual field tours. Several council members stressed the value of seeing the resources first-hand and learning about local issues from local people, and the spirit of consensus building field trips promote.

The RAC discussed whether summer was the best time for a field tour. Bisson asked if members would like to meet in Glennallen in the spring of 2005 and talk about permitting and other issues for large events such as Arctic Man. Council members liked Bisson’s suggestion, but were also interested in visiting the Bering Glacier research camp in 2005. Bisson suggested a community meeting in Cordova to meet with Native officials and other residents, and then fly out to the camp to talk with researchers.

The chair suggested the RAC consider this idea and discuss it further when they set their schedule for 2005 the following day.

LUNCH

Prior to public comment, Susan Olsen handed out maps showing proposed OHV designations under the various alternatives for the East Alaska RMP. She explained these would be useful for the discussion of her draft resolution on day two, since the alternatives had changed since Olsen drafted her resolution.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ruth McHenry, Copper Country Alliance (via teleconference):

- McHenry said she was a Copper Basin resident and a member of Copper Country Alliance, a local conservation organization.
- The decisions BLM will make in the East Alaska RMP are long-term, and may have lasting and irrevocable effects on the renewable resources of the area.
- She urged BLM to exercise fairness in selecting alternatives that guide OHV use, and felt Alternative C was the only balanced alternative.
- She also stressed concerns about the lack of appropriate protections during interim management of state-selected lands.
- She urged BLM to manage and maintain habitat for all wildlife, both game and non-game species.

(Note: McHenry provided a written summary of her comments, which was provided to council members and is available to others upon request.)

Brenda Rebne, Ahtna, Inc. (Anchorage)

- Rebne expressed concerns about the lack of management of 17(b) easements across Ahtna lands.
- Extensive damage is occurring on both conveyed and selected lands from easement misuse and overuse. Shareholders have been threatened and physically accosted by those using the easements, who refuse to use alternative easements to protect damaged trails.
- Lack of agency management of the easements BLM reserves results in substantial costs to Ahtna, Inc.
- Known trails are detrimental to conveyed property and to Ahtna selections, and impact the corporation's ability to prioritize because lands no longer have the same value once this kind of damage has occurred.
- Rebne felt some 17(b) easements should be extinguished because alternative routes of access exist.
- Rebne urged the RAC to encourage BLM and other agencies to provide management of easements reserved across Ahtna lands.

RAC members asked if the problem was seasonal. Rebne said summers are the worst and during hunting seasons, but said it's a year-round problem. Trespass is a huge problem, campers proliferate, recreationists use rigs larger than allowed on easements, and no one polices the area.

Council members asked if BLM closed the easements to OHV use, would that impact Ahtna. Rebne said Ahtna shareholders use OHVs to access their lands. One RAC member asked which alternative (East Alaska RMP) Rebne supports. She said she couldn't say, but they do not support Alternative D.

Bisson said this issue is not unique to Ahtna lands, and BLM is given no funding to address the problem. Who should manage established easements is a gray area.

Rebne said Ahtna shareholders believe the agency reserving the easement has the responsibility of managing it. If agencies can't manage an easement, it should be closed, since it's unfair to expect private landowners to bear the costs of managing public easements.

The chair suggested the RAC include this issue in their 2005 work plan. Bisson said he would welcome the RAC's recommendations, which might lend substance to funding requests.

Donna Pennington, Ahtna, Inc. (Tok)

- Ahtna lands are closed to non-shareholders, but this doesn't keep easement users from trespassing and abusing Ahtna lands.
- Ahtna posts signs, but easement users immediately remove them because they know troopers won't cite if an area isn't signed. Ahtna employees have been physically threatened. Ahtna now has liability concerns about sending employees out to address problems.
- The state doesn't enforce hunting regulations, resulting in wanton waste of wildlife and severe impacts to the land and resources. Hunters cross sensitive streams with ATVs. BLM and the state should consider the cost of doing nothing.
- BLM doesn't do enough to educate easement users. BLM reserves easements and should help with the problems easements create.
- Ahtna needs BLM to be a good neighbor and step up to the plate and do something. Ahtna strives to be a good neighbor and they need BLM to do the same.

Forest Hayden, Fortymile Mining District

- In July 1999 firefighters were instructed by fire managers to let a fire burn near Chicken. A local resident was injured and property was destroyed. That fall BLM asked for input about the fire plan. Fortymile residents vehemently asked BLM to protect lives and property, and thought they had an understanding with BLM that their property would be protected if and when fires occurred again.
- Then in 2004 the Incident Commander declared the Fortymile a limited suppression area and said BLM would protect life and property only, so the fire was allowed to become out of control. Some firefighters "broke ranks" and helped. Other residents were simply told to get out due to imminent danger. Some were allowed to use sprinkler systems and equipment, but many were given no help or assistance.
- BLM must change the limited suppression language to protect miner's property. Mining claims are private property and should be protected the same as other private property.
- Fortymile residents are disappointed with BLM for the lack of assistance. They are disappointed that they worked with BLM in good faith in 1999, yet those discussions were ignored in 2004.

One RAC member asked why a structure on a valid mining claim wouldn't be considered property. Scott Billing explained BLM can help miners protect their property through training in defensible space. But during extreme fire events like July 2004, BLM can't guarantee resources will be available when there are active fires in full suppression areas. He also explained the state sets protection levels for their lands and BLM must honor those decisions during fire season.

Rachel James, Alaska Coalition

- James said she is BLM wildlands coordinator for the Alaska Coalition, a nonprofit Alaska-based environmental organization.

- She facilitated meetings in the Glennallen area where concerned individuals studied maps of the various alternatives offered in BLM's draft East Alaska plan. Many people support a non-motorized vision for parts of the planning area.
- The Alaska Coalition believes many people support the conservation alternative and that many different user groups agree special conservation designations are appropriate.

There was general discussion by the RAC about the role of public involvement in developing alternatives, and what degree of planning is appropriate for selected lands where BLM's management is interim only.

John Schoen, Audubon Alaska

- Schoen said he was a member of the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska Research and Monitoring Team as well.
- He recently visited Alpine and was pleased with the work ConocoPhillips has done to minimize the footprint at satellites, their spill contingency plans, and other precautions.
- However, the conservation community has serious concerns about ever-expanding infrastructure and what that means in sensitive areas.
- The focus of Audubon Alaska is to identify areas of critical importance, such as Teshekpuk Lake for its unique molting goose habitat. It's risky to expand development into that area. There is tremendous consensus among agencies and groups on this point.
- Schoen read comments BLM had received from other federal agencies, the North Slope Borough, and the research community about potential impacts to sensitive habitat under BLM's preferred alternative. He encouraged the RAC to study these comments and encourage BLM to weigh the information carefully in selecting a final alternative.

END OF PUBLIC COMMENT

Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT)

David Sileo, manager of BLM's Public Information Section (Public Room), gave a brief overview of the PILT program.

Sileo explained these are federal payments to local governments with federal lands within their boundaries. The payments are intended to offset loss of tax revenues for those lands. These funds help local units of government provide vital services such as firefighting and police protection, construction of public schools and roads, and search and rescue operations. Since the program began in 1977, BLM has distributed over \$3.2 billion to local governments nationwide.

Each December BLM prepares a report by state/county/borough of acreage held in federal ownership. BLM's Washington office budget group then calculates the PILT payments based on acreage figures, census data, and Congressional appropriations. Payments are made to local governments the following July. Alaska's share was roughly \$15 million this year.

BREAK

Comprehensive Travel Management Planning

Debbie Hollen of Resources, Lands and Planning provided a short presentation about travel management and planning on BLM lands nationwide.

- BLM is conducting nationwide comprehensive travel management planning to determine if a more aggressive approach is needed due to the growth of motorized recreation on public lands, citizen recommendations, and proposed U.S. Forest Service travel management rules.
- Travel management is proactive planning and on-the-ground management of travel routes to ensure access, resource protection and regulatory compliance. This includes all aspects of access and travel across public lands, not just motorized or OHV use.
- RMP level planning requires that all areas have OHV designations and a defined travel management network within five years of completing the plan.
- Several Lower 48 RACs have made recommendations regarding planning, on-the-ground management, and educating the public about OHV designations.
- Hollen summarized the USFS proposed rule that would require establishing a system of roads, trails and areas designated for motorized vehicles, and would prohibit use of motorized outside the designated systems. The FS has received over 70,000 comments to the rule, largely in favor.
- Hollen then posed the question, is BLM's approach to travel planning and management adequate to meet increasing demands, or is a more aggressive approach needed? She said this was the RAC's opportunity to weigh in and Henri Bisson would relay those comments to the Bureau.

Bisson asked if the RAC was comfortable with BLM conducting travel management planning during the individual land use planning efforts, and asked the RAC to address this during their deliberations the following day.

Public Use Cabins and Unauthorized Cabins

Hollen said the RAC has looked at the issue of unauthorized cabins on BLM lands and the need for additional public use recreation cabins. Unauthorized cabins (trespass structures) remain a problem for BLM. There are about 100 such structures in the Interior, some 200 in the Glennallen field area, and about ten in southcentral Alaska. Some are used seasonally; others are unsafe for use and present a safety hazard for the public.

Eventually, some of these unauthorized cabins may be suitable for public use and this will be addressed during RMP planning. This is already happening in the East Alaska plan. BLM may

be able to permit some of these structures. Hollen said there was a copy of the permitting regulations (FLPMA and ANILCA) in the RAC packets.

Yellow-Billed Loon ESA Eligibility

Hollen said the 90-day period to evaluate the Endangered Species Act eligibility request ended in July. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service forwarded a recommendation to its Washington office, but there is no published finding yet.

BLM will hold a workshop in December with FWS and other agencies and researchers to address appropriate safeguards for the Northeast plan amendment to protect yellow-billed loon habitat in the planning area.

2004 Fire Season

Alaska Fire Service manager Scott Billing presented highlights of the 2004 season, including high fire activity, smoke issues, health impacts, and economic impacts. Smoke conditions impeded accurate mapping for a time. Some residents asked why fire managers allowed conditions to become so severe.

Billing explained that state and federal fire managers developed the Alaska Interagency Wildland Fire Management Plan in 1998. Under the plan, lands are classified as Critical, Full, Modified or Limited in terms of fire management options, and these options guide fire suppression activity, regardless of who manages the fire. Approximately 64 percent of Alaska is classified as Limited (monitor only).

Billing noted the reality is, there are simply not enough crews in Alaska to suppress all fires during an intense fire season, nor is this an ecologically sound approach. 2004 was the warmest summer on record for many communities. Weather events plus record temperatures set the stage for situations where fire managers were not able to suppress everything or manage smoke.

Billing said fire managers are looking at smoke management options, which might include establishing air quality thresholds in limited areas. Managers also need to provide more education about the role of fire in healthy ecosystems and more FireWise education for rural homeowners.

Bisson added that Bob Schneider will meet with Fortymile miners soon to address some of the issues raised by Forest Hayden earlier in the meeting. He suggested Keith Tryck attend the meeting as the RAC's representative.

Tryck said he would attend. He said miners in the Ruby district were in a similar situation a few years back, which prompted him to become involved. Tryck advised miners to make sure their structures are identified on maps, and to also do their defensible space homework.

Council members and BLM managers discussed the need for getting accurate information out and how local residents could be used as a local resource for fire personnel during fire events.

Meeting recessed at 5 p.m.

Friday, October 15, 2004

Council members not present: Phil Driver. The chair called meeting to order at 8:35 a.m.

Bob Schneider, Northern Field Office (continuation of field manager updates from day one)

- ConocoPhillips proposes to drill 2 or 3 exploration wells in the petroleum reserve this winter. They will need additional ice roads once tundra conditions are suitable. Council members had questions about how ice roads are constructed. Schneider said it might be helpful for the RAC to look at ice roads at some point.
- A Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) Team recently assessed the need for emergency stabilization and rehab from the fires of 2004. The team produced a report with recommendations. Rehab work will occur after breakup in spring 2005. Weed control is also an issue in areas where soil was disturbed during suppression. The RAC asked for information about specific weed species that occur after wildland fires. Schneider agreed to provide a handout of invasive weeds common in burned areas.

Larry Taylor noted that caribou migrations through the burn area were normal after the 1999 Kink Fire, with the exception of calving areas. He also noted that water quality on the river returned to normal after a time.

Several RAC members wanted to know more invasive weeds on public lands in Alaska. The chair suggested BLM provide a presentation on this topic at the next RAC meeting.

- Schneider summarized the work of the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska Research and Monitoring Team and provided meeting notes and an indicator matrix the team was working on. BLM has set aside \$50,000 to contract out the work of drafting a monitoring strategy based on the matrix once completed. John Schoen and other RMT members will review/critique the draft plan.

David van den Berg asked how the need for research and monitoring would be addressed in the South plan. Schneider said BLM is working on the South preplan, with scoping to occur later in 2005, and the RAC and other publics would be engaged at that time. A Colville management plan will eventually tier off from the South plan.

North Slope Science Initiative

John Payne summarized the progress of the NSSI. The Arctic Research Commission will bring expertise and visibility to NSSI, and provide a link to the International Arctic Commission.

Several federal agencies have pledged support and funding (USGS, DOE, NOAA, MMS) in 2005, and other agency partners will provide in-kind contributions. BLM will fund an executive director. Eleven individuals with solid qualifications applied and will be interviewed soon.

Long-term funding for the NSSI looks promising, but it's important to have a strategy in place for using the funds before we actively pursue funding. A revised version of the NSSI plan prepared by Argonne is being reviewed. The plan is a programmatic strategy document, since agencies want a broad overarching document that leaves room for flexibility. The revised version looks promising.

The NSSI science advisory group charter is being reviewed by the Solicitors and will be forwarded to the Secretary soon for approval. BLM will start the nomination process around March 2005, approximately one year from the time the RMT was reestablished. BLM hopes RMT members will consider seeking nomination.

Payne encouraged the RAC to visit www.northslope.org for information about the NSSI. The site logged 950,000 hits over the last year, so there's an amazing amount of interest in the effort.

BREAK

OHV Subgroup Report, Resolution

Subgroup chair Susan Olsen explained the RAC did not act on the draft resolution at the Unalakleet meeting due to absence of a quorum. BLM has since revised the alternatives for East Alaska, so she modified the resolution. The gist of the original resolution was to ensure opportunities for non-motorized recreation and to address concerns about interim management of selected lands. BLM has modified the alternatives to address some of these concerns.

Subgroup member Keith Tryck encouraged BLM to exercise management options that provide quiet opportunities for users in a well-thought out system that addresses the needs of all users. Olsen urged BLM make sure this commitment to providing suitable opportunities for all users is reflected in the preferred alternative and later in step-down plans.

There was general discussion about whether "existing trails" (in the East Alaska RMP) refers only to designated trails or to all trails. Ramone McCoy said only a small portion of the 1,500 miles of trails in the planning area are inventoried at this time, so there are few designated trails. She said step-down plans are where designations are addressed.

The RAC discussed whether the existing language was too permissive, how long it would take to inventory trails, funding concerns, impacts to Native lands once trails are identified, and appropriate planning for trails on state-selected lands.

At the next meeting, the RAC said they would like to hear more about RMP planning versus step-down plans.

Olsen then recapped her revised resolution (attached). After some discussion to clarify/modify specific language in the resolution, the RAC voted on the resolution. The measure passed unanimously by those present. The recorder agreed to forward the resolution to Phil Driver for his absentee vote.

(Recorder's note: Phil Driver voted in favor of the resolution Oct. 18, 2004.)

RAC RMP Liaison Reports

- Ring of Fire: Charlie Boddy said he and/or Sandra Key discussed the plan with AFO field manager June Bailey, AFO planner Bob Lloyd, and Rachel James of the Alaska Coalition. After reviewing the comments, he said he felt the scoping report is acceptable. He said it was valuable to meet with the lead planner and encouraged other liaisons to do the same. The RAC agreed it was important to continue this dialog throughout the RMP process.
- Kobuk/Seward: Teresa Imm said the planning area was “checkerboard” and the comments reflect this. Concerns include OHV travel/access, subsistence impacts, guide and outfitters capacity, and how to address the state’s concerns about planning for selected lands.
- Northeast National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska: David van den Berg referenced written comments by the North Slope Borough about the lack of significant new information or technology since 1998 that would justify opening areas now closed to leasing or surface activities. He asked Teresa Imm her opinion of that statement.

Imm noted that 213,000 acres of the most sensitive area would remain closed under BLM’s preferred alternative. Project manager Susan Childs noted that BLM is still analyzing the 215,000 comments received and may yet modify the preferred alternative in relation to Teshekpuk Lake.

There was general discussion regarding substantive public comment versus form letters received en masse via the Web and the value of comments that don’t reflect unique, substantive content, but may still reflect broad public sentiment and concern. Van den Berg noted that NEPA doesn’t effectively address this issue.

Ramone McCoy said the purpose of soliciting public comment was to help federal managers make sound decisions, and comments that don’t offer substantive input may not help the decision maker. She stressed that NEPA isn’t a numbers exercise. Van den Berg said the public is often reducing to “voting” due to the complexity of the issues.

- South National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska: van den Berg said this is the third and final piece of the reserve (9.2 million acres). BLM has just completed the preplan and is set to initiate scoping in early 2005. He said he appreciated receiving the preplan, but would like the RAC to be more involved in preplanning, since the preplan seems to set sideboards. He noted the absence of designated areas of critical environmental concern (ACEC’s) in the reserve, and the overall absence of a way to protect surface values.

George Oviatt said activity planning in a petroleum reserve is not subject to FLPMA. Van den Berg asked how BLM could open the planning area to mineral entry without a way to protect surface values. He also wondered why opening the area to mineral entry emerged during the internal process of preplanning, rather than scoping.

BLM and the RAC discussed what level of RAC involvement is appropriate during preplanning. Bob Schneider suggested the RAC might be involved in “pre-scoping” work. Susan Olsen suggested that each October BLM present a synopsis of preplans for the coming year, and the RAC could factor that workload into their annual work plan.

RAC 2005 Schedule and Work Plan

After some discussion, the RAC set quarterly meeting dates for 2005 as follows:

- Feb. 8-9, 2005 (Anchorage)
- April 7-8, 2005 (Glennallen, with possible side trip to Arctic Man for those interested)
- Aug. 10-12, 2005 (field tour to Bering Glacier, community meeting in Cordova)
- October 13-14, 2005 (Fairbanks)

The RAC reviewed topics suggested earlier in the meeting for the 2005 work plan: 17(b) easement management, S. 1466 report on withdrawals, OHV planning, wildland fire management, invasive weeds management, RMP planning, and activity planning in the petroleum reserve.

The chair called for volunteers for a subgroup to prepare the 2005 work plan. David van den Berg and June McAtee agreed to work with Tom Crafford on the plan. Crafford said he would email RAC members to solicit any additional work items before compiling the plan.

Old business: travel management question from day one

The RAC noted there was no quorum to formally respond, but those present generally agreed that BLM could adequately address travel management issues on a plan-by-plan basis.

Adjourn 12:30 p.m.

CERTIFICATION

This document is a fair and accurate summation of the BLM Alaska Resource Advisory Council meeting of October 14-15, 2004.

/s/
Tom Crafford, RAC Chair

Feb. 8, 2005
Date