

Bureau of Land Management
Alaska Resource Advisory Council Meeting
Office of Aircraft Services
Anchorage, Alaska
December 1-2, 2015

MEETING MINUTES

Day 1: Tuesday, December 1, 2015

Council members present: Kathryn Martin, Warren Olson, Chris Degernes, Barrett Ristroph, PJ Simon, Gary Morrison, Stan Foo, Rosie Barr, John Hopson, Jr., Brennan Cain, Mark Billingsley, Michael Wald, and David Brown. RAC Chair Suzanne Little was unable to attend and Vice Chair Kathryn Martin assumed the chair and led the meeting.

BLM representatives present: Bud Cribley (BLM Alaska State Director and Designated Federal Official (DFO)), Ted Murphy, Dennis Teitzel, Erika Reed, Marlo Draper, Jason Taylor, Serena Sweet, Lenore Heppler, John Hoppe, Joe Galluzzi, KJ Mushovic, Thom Jennings, and Ryan Nitz.

Representatives of agencies other than BLM: Sara Longan (AK Department of Natural Resources).

Members of the public present: Bob Palowski; Lois Epstein (Wilderness Society), Ray Richards (Doyon, Ltd.), Lindsey Hejduk (Conservation Lands Foundation).

RAC Chair **Kathryn Martin** called the meeting to order at 8:40am.

Thom Jennings, BLM Alaska RAC Coordinator, advised the RAC regarding meeting-related logistics and the process of travel reimbursement by BLM Alaska.

Bud Cribley, BLM Alaska State Director, addressed the RAC, advising the group regarding its authority and purpose, and giving remarks on lands management and the political process. Cribley then gave an overview of the meeting agenda.

RAC members and BLM Alaska staff introduced themselves.

RAC Chair **Martin** asked for any questions regarding the agenda.

MOTION: RAC member **Brennan Cain** moved to approve the agenda. RAC member **PJ Simon** seconded. Motion passed.

RAC Chair **Martin** asked for any questions regarding the 2014 meeting minutes. **Martin** asked the group about a missing last name from the minutes in question. No one could recall the name.

MOTION: **Cain** moved to approve the 2014 meeting minutes. **Simon** seconded. Motion passed.

Cribley introduced **Jason Taylor, BLM Alaska Ecologist**.

Taylor spoke to the RAC regarding the Arctic and Arctic issues, particularly the NPR-A, addressing the DOI landscape approach, Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (LCCs), and National Park Service Inventory & Monitoring Programs. It is important to view all of these efforts in context to see how they relate to the arctic, and how they help inform resource management decisions in a landscape scale approach. There is a need to take an international view to get a complete picture of the Arctic; thus, the Arctic Council.

Taylor described and discussed the Arctic Council Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna ([CAFF](#)) working group and the Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program ([CBMP](#)).

RAC member **Michael Wald** asked for clarification regarding whether the CBMP focused on interpreting existing data or if its focus is on creating new data. **Taylor** answered that primarily existing data is being synthesized, but that the process lays groundwork for the collection of new information. Data synthesis also helps to establish global standards.

Taylor related that there BLM Alaska and North Slope Science Initiative (NSSI) staff members are involved in the Arctic Council's CBMP. Those staff members include Stacey Fritz, Dennis Lassuy, John Payne, Jason Taylor, and Matt Whitman. The CBMP is part of an overall Assessment, Inventory and Monitoring (AIM) strategy.

RAC member **David Brown** asked what is currently being monitored in NPR-A. **Taylor** replied that a Field Office specialist would be the best person to address that question in detail, but that at a large-scale AIM level, monitoring includes aspects such as percentage of vegetation cover, height of vegetation, and depth of permafrost.

RAC member **Gary Morrison** asked what countries are involved in the Arctic Council's efforts. **Taylor** replied that there are eight member nations (Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden, and the United States), six permanent participant organizations, and twelve countries plus nine intergovernmental organizations that have observer status. More information can be found at <http://www.arctic-council.org/index.php/en/about-us>

Morrison indicated that he works a lot with Russia and asked how the Arctic Council finds coordinating with Russia. **Taylor** answered that information can be difficult to get from the Russian delegation, but that they are participating in the Council and are making efforts.

Cribley remarked that, with the reduction of the polar ice cap increasing accessibility in the Arctic, many of the Arctic Council's observer nations (specifically China, Japan and South Korea) are likely trying to position themselves to take advantage of Arctic resources. Arctic Council member countries need to remain engaged and proactive to make sure their voices are heard regarding how Arctic resources are developed. The RAC is an important voice, with a direct line to the DOI Secretary, so it is important for the RAC to be engaged.

BREAK

Joe Galluzzi, BLM Alaska Chief of Solid Minerals, presented Mining Law Administration. Topics included staffing, budget, recent and upcoming policy, trainings and other happenings.

Regarding policy, **Morrison** asked if **Galluzzi** was familiar with the RAC Subcommittee on Placer Mining. **Galluzzi** indicated that being a recent hire, he was not aware of the subcommittee. **Morrison** related that there seems to have been a disconnect between BLM Alaska and the RAC Placer Mining Subcommittee, as communication between the two ceased about nine months ago. **Galluzzi** replied that he will check with the relevant parties at BLM Alaska on the issue. **Morrison** replied that he will follow up, as he was interested in continuing their work. **Note:** The Placer Mining Subcommittee completed the work it was originally formed to do and therefore there have been no additional meetings or conversations.

Cribley asked, regarding Army Corps of Engineers (COE)/BLM Abandoned Mine Lands issues, what lands are involved? Specifically, any lands conveyed to native corporations? **Galluzzi** replied that they are all BLM administered lands; no lands conveyed to native corporations are involved.

RAC member **Mark Billingsley** asked if there was a proposed mine near the southern Steese/White Mountains area. **Lenore Hepler, BLM Alaska Eastern Interior Field Manager**, replied that there was a proposal near Livengood, as well as some possible rare earth mineral deposits near southern Steese. These are going through a planning process to determine if leases are possible.

Wald asked if any details regarding the Constantine Mine project were available. **Dennis Teitzel, BLM Alaska Glennallen Field Manager** replied: in June (2015), a plan was submitted to continue exploration. The plan involves an additional ca. 2.5 miles of road and ca. 40 additional drill sites for bore hole testing, as well as construction of a bridge across Glacier Creek. The public comment period for that plan is December 2 through January 8. **Wald** asked for clarification as to whether or not the new proposal involved only BLM lands. **Teitzel** responded that though the vast majority of the construction would happen on BLM lands, the proposal also involved some State lands. **KJ Mushovic, BLM Alaska Supervisory Public Affairs Specialist**, indicated that BLM issued a press release on Constantine the previous evening.

Galluzzi presented next on the Jack Wade Creek Project and the new reclamation techniques involved in the project. Information on the project can be found at http://www.blm.gov/ak/st/en/prog/minerals/reclamation/jack_wade_creek.html

Morrison enquired as to the bond for the site. **Hepler** responded that there is no bond, as it is an abandoned mine site.

RAC member **Simon** enquired if it is possible for Alaska Native corporations to be involved more in the process. **Galluzzi** replied in the affirmative, and that Native corporations will be invited to view the area in the spring. **Galluzzi** clarified that anyone from the RAC would also be welcome to attend the same viewing/demonstration.

Billingsley enquired as to where funding for future reclamation projects for abandoned mines would come from. **Serena Sweet, BLM Alaska Division of Resources Supervisory Planner**, answered that there is some potential to establish a mitigation bank of public funds that could be used to address abandoned mine reclamation projects on public lands.

Billingsley asked for clarification as to whether the new reclamation techniques used in the Jack Wade Creek project involve more heavy equipment time. **Galluzzi** replied that they do involve an increase of

20-23% heavy equipment time but that, as time goes on and the techniques become more familiar, that number may decrease.

AT 11:10AM, TED MURPHY, BLM ALASKA ASSOCIATE STATE DIRECTOR, REPLACED BUD CRIBLEY AS THE DFO. AFTER A BRIEF INTRODUCTION FROM MURPHY, THE JACK WADE CREEK QUESTIONS CONTINUED.

Galluzzi asked the RAC if there is interest in reestablishing the Placer Mining Subcommittee. **Morrison** replied that he needed to check notes from previous meetings to recall who was involved. **Sweet** related that the original work of the subcommittee was accomplished, but new issues seem to justify reviving the group.

RAC Chair **Martin** asked if the RAC would like to discuss reforming the Placer Mining Subcommittee at this point. The group replied in the affirmative. **Martin** asked **Jennings** how many members a subcommittee needs. **Jennings** replied that it is open-ended, and that subcommittees can also include non-RAC members.

MOTION: RAC member **Cain** moved to reestablish the Placer Mining Subcommittee. RAC member **Morrison** seconded.

RAC Chair **Martin** asked who is interested in serving on the subcommittee. Members **Morrison, Simon, Stan Foo and Rosie Barr** volunteered.

Morrison suggested that someone with fisheries expertise would be beneficial on the subcommittee. RAC member **Chris Degernes** remarked that **Sara Longan** would be a good fit. **Simon** asked how often the subcommittee met in its previous iteration. RAC Chair **Martin** replied that it depended on the scope of their work. **Degernes** commented that subcommittee meetings were often held via teleconference. **Morrison** suggested that the Alaska Miners Association be notified if the subcommittee is reestablished.

Degernes nominated **Sara Longan, Alaska Department of Natural Resources Office of Project Management and Permitting Executive Director** to the subcommittee.

MOTION: RAC Chair **Martin** asked for a vote on the motion to reestablish the Placer Mining Subcommittee. Motion passed.

LUNCH BREAK

Mike McCrum, BLM Alaska Environmental Engineer and Red Devil Mine Project Manager, presented on the Red Devil Mine Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study (primarily on the Feasibility Study). Information on the project can be found at http://www.blm.gov/ak/st/en/fo/ado/hazardous_materials/red_devil_mine.html

McCrum described potential remedial actions to be pursued regarding the remaining contaminants, with four alternatives: 1. No action; 2. Institutional and access controls (fencing and signs to prevent entry); 3. Excavation of contaminated materials and disposal onsite; and 4. Excavation of contaminated materials and disposal offsite (likely a hazardous waste facility in Oregon). The proposed preferred alternative is under agency review right now. Once agency input is received, feedback from the public will be pursued.

Cain asked if there is a timeline regarding selection of the preferred alternative. **McCrum** indicated that the project has two physical parts in reality—Red Devil Creek, and Kuskokwim River and groundwater. Selection of the preferred alternative is close for Red Devil Creek, but much more information is needed before a determination can be made regarding Kuskokwim River and groundwater.

Foo asked if options three and four above would have similar timelines. **McCrum** replied that they would be close, but that option three would likely take more time in the long run due to the necessity for closer continuous monitoring and testing.

Simon enquired as to the value of the mercury produced over the life of the mine. **McCrum** replied that he was not sure of the value, but that ca. 35,000 2.5-quart flasks of mercury were produced.

Serena Sweet presented on Oil and Gas Development in the NPR-A. The presentation included information regarding the Greater Mooses Tooth 1 (GMT1) and Greater Mooses Tooth 2 (GMT2) Units, Winter 2015/2016 exploration, and time for questions. Detailed information regarding the Greater Mooses Tooth Unit Proposed Development Project can be found at http://www.blm.gov/pgdata/content/ak/en/prog/energy/oil_gas/npra/GMTU_proposed_dev_proj.html

Billingsley enquired as to the start date for development in GMT1. **Sweet** responded that she would need to look up that information.

Morrison enquired as to what has been constructed so far in GMT2. **Sweet** responded that the road to CD5 has been constructed. **Morrison** asked if Alaska Native regional corporations will receive subsurface royalties in areas where roads are on village corporation lands. **Sweet** replied that, since the lands have not yet been conveyed, the situation is unclear at this time.

RAC member **Barrett Ristroph** asked for an update on the most recent leases. **Murphy** replied that ConocoPhillips was the only bidder and won six leases, all on lands adjacent to their current leases. **Sweet** indicated that updated maps of the lease sale results are available at http://www.blm.gov/pgdata/content/ak/en/prog/energy/oil_gas/npra/GMTU_proposed_dev_proj.html

BREAK

Lenore Heppler presented on the Mosquito Fork (Fortymile Wild & Scenic River) Environmental Assessment. The presentation focused on access and protection, staging and long-term camping, primarily pertaining to miners seeking access to State suction dredge mining claims on the Mosquito Fork. BLM manages the river's uplands, through which access to the claims is sought and on which equipment staging areas and long-term mining camps have been allowed in places and may be further allowed.

Morrison asked whether suction dredge miners in the Mosquito Fork area are there recreationally, or have permitted claims. **Heppler** responded that they have mining claims, administered by the State.

Foo asked if motorized vehicles are allowed on the trails in the area. **Heppler** replied that motorized vehicles up to 1,500 pounds are allowed on existing trails only.

Simon asked if BLM could include Doyon Ltd. in outreach moving forward. **Heppler** said yes.

Wald enquired as to how the RAC can most effectively participate in the effort. **Heppler** responded that the RAC can work with BLM on outreach, as well as alternative development ideas.

BREAK

3:00pm Public Comment Period:

The first member of the public to speak was **Captain Bob Pawlowski, formerly of NOAA and the State of Alaska (Chief of Staff for a State Senator and Advisor to the Director of the Division of Oil and Gas).**

Cpt. Pawlowski:

- Recognizes and applauds BLM for their efforts in the GMT1 area, but has concerns about future development in NPR-A, especially if Alaska is not recognized as a distinct (from the lower 48) oil and gas region
- Alaskans have proven their abilities to develop and deliver oil and gas. Believes the State has the right regulations in place to balance development and conservation. Warns that a one-size-fits-all approach will not work on the North Slope. Believes that, to prevent receiving insufficient royalties from BLM leases, BLM should maintain Alaska as a distinct region for oil and gas development, with regulations and standards aligned with those of the State
- Is concerned with the mitigation banking concept when mitigation requirements are defined outside of the initial lease terms. The state defines mitigation measures in the lease terms and conditions. Believes this is a more proactive approach than BLM's and encourages BLM to align more with State procedures in this area
- Encourages BLM to have separate regulations for the North Slope and NPR-A, and thinks those regulations should be in line with those of the State

The second and final member of the public to speak was **Lois Epstein of the Wilderness Society.** Ms. Epstein:

- Is concerned that the Caelus proposal for work in Smith Bay, a major industrial project, will involve snow roads that will impact caribou range
- Regrets that BLM did not announce that an EIS was taking place in the Caelus project area, and hopes that in the future BLM will be more public about planned EISs and similar work
- Feels strongly that the American public at-large should see returns from development of federal resources, rather than returns being seen only in Alaska
- Is concerned that Caelus will be staging on BLM lands, near sensitive habitat areas

Simon asked regarding species of waterfowl in the area. **Wald** replied that there are at least Black Brant, King Eider, Snow Geese and Greater White-fronted Geese.

Ristroph remarked that there is a great need for collaboration between the BLM and the State on development in NPR-A.

RAC Chair **Martin** asked if there were any other comments.

Simon enquired as to how BLM goes about prioritizing response on lands involved in wildfires, and why BLM needed to bring in firefighters from outside Alaska this summer rather than hiring locals. **Murphy** responded that resources from outside Alaska were brought in because they were the only resources that could be found. Training of locals is/was too limited. Inquiries regarding firefighting opportunities

should be directed to Kent Slaughter of the Alaska Fire Service. Regarding prioritization of lands, **Murphy** indicated that it is a judgment call and that each fire is unique. The decisions are made based on many factors, including resource values. **Simon** indicated that government-to-government channels are being pursued to try to secure more funding for firefighter training.

RAC Chair **Martin** asked if there were further comments.

Cain asked how the RAC can be more helpful to BLM. RAC Chair **Martin** remarked that she brought with her a similar concern from the absentee RAC Chair, that she hopes that the RAC can be involved more proactively.

Wald remarked that, due to the rigid and NEPA-defined decision making process, by the time the RAC is involved in a process it is often after decisions have already been made. Can this be addressed?

Ristroph replied that NEPA has to be followed, but that there is nothing concrete stopping the RAC from “driving the bus” a bit more, citing the Red Devil cleanup presentation from earlier in the day as an example.

Wald enquired as to some examples of when the RAC has been most helpful to BLM. **Murphy** replied that the RAC’s work with BLM regarding trapper cabins was very helpful. **Heppler** replied that the RAC was very helpful in the question of long-term camping on the Wild & Scenic River sections of the Fortymile. **Murphy** indicated that the RAC has also been helpful in invasive species work.

Wald asked if, in those instances, the RAC’s involvement was prompted by BLM or initiated by the RAC itself, and who should be doing the initiating. **Murphy** replied both.

Heppler remarked that meshing schedules can be very difficult in cases where projects have compressed timeframes. **Sweet** indicated that it is much easier to get RAC input on longer projects.

Foo indicated that BLM has been accommodating to the RAC’s desire to form subcommittees on topics of interest.

Morrison remarked that BLM could take greater advantage of RAC members regarding gathering public sentiment from various areas.

RAC Chair **Martin** remarked that there have been few RAC meetings recently, and that the RAC should come up with agenda items to prompt meetings, rather than waiting for BLM to suggest a meeting.

At 3:40pm, RAC Chair **Martin** called a recess until the morning of December 2, 2015.

Day 2: Tuesday, December 2, 2015

Council members present: Kathryn Martin (chair), Warren Olson, Chris Degernes, Barrett Ristroph, PJ Simon, Stan Foo, Rosie Barr, John Hopson, Jr., Brennan Cain, Mark Billingsley, Michael Wald, and David Brown.

BLM representatives present: Bud Cribley, Erika Reed, Kent Slaughter, Tami DeFries, Jena Daly, Stacie McIntosh, Serena Sweet, Lenore Heppler, Michael Schoder, Tim Hammond (via phone), KJ Mushovic, Thom Jennings, and Ryan Nitz.

Representatives of agencies other than BLM: Sara Longan (AK Department of Natural Resources).

Members of the public present: Sara Longan (SOA DNR), Ray Richards (Doyon, Ltd.), Lindsey Hejduk (Conservation Lands Foundation), Lois Epstein and David Krause (The Wilderness Society).

RAC Chair **Kathryn Martin** called the meeting to order at 8:44 a.m.

RAC Chair **Martin** provided a recap of Day 1.

Bud Cribley, BLM Alaska State Director, enquired as to the groups' impression of the previous day's presentations on mining (specifically the Jack Wade Creek Project) and mitigation banking. RAC member **Brennan Cain** indicated that his impression was very positive. RAC member **Chris Degernes** remarked that Jack Wade Creek provides good examples for miners regarding what is possible in reclamation and mitigation efforts.

Wald asked if the how-to information regarding mitigation and reclamation techniques would be included as part of the permitting process, or provided to miners after the fact in a separate part of the process. **Cribley** replied that that situation is fluid at this point, but that integration will likely increase as time goes on.

Serena Sweet, BLM Alaska Division of Resources Supervisory Planner, and **Jena Daly, BLM Alaska Outdoor Recreation Planner**, presented an Overview of the Resource Management Planning (RMP) Process and Planning 2.0. The areas covered in the presentations included:

- [Eastern Interior RMP](#) (6.5 million acres)
- [Central Yukon RMP](#) (13.5 million acres)
- [Bering Sea-Western Interior RMP](#) (13.4 million acres)

The presentation also included information on withdrawals and government-to-government communications.

Sweet indicated that BLM is still accepting feedback online regarding Planning 2.0. BLM is aiming to have a Planning 2.0 handbook available in November 2016. Public review for the handbook will likely take place in the late spring.

Cain asked if Native corporations are/were included in the government-to-government communications referenced in the presentation. **Sweet** replied that she would need to check with BLM's tribal liaison on the matter.

RAC Chair **Martin** remarked that there may be some opportunity regarding funding for tribes for trail maintenance relating to 17(b) and RS2477 easements. There are also conflicts between what a 17(b) and RS2477 easements allow. The 17(b) most often has limitations of what width the trail will be while RS2477 claims are all 100 feet wide. Often 17(b) and RS2477 easements overlap causing confusion regarding how wide and what's allowed within the easement.

Sweet demonstrated BLM's online planning sites and resources.

BREAK

Kent Slaughter, BLM Alaska Fire Service (AFS) Manager, presented on the 2015 Alaska fire season. The presentation began with statistics. 2015 was the second-largest fire season (in number of acres burned) on record, but was also one of the shortest. There was a considerable amount of assistance received from the lower 48, which helped make the season a successful one. There were no accidents and no aircraft incidents.

Slaughter indicated that the RAC's input would be particularly useful for AFS in assisting to manage AFS's relationship with the State Division of Forestry, especially in light of Division of Forestry budget cuts; and ensuring that AFS's planning processes are aligned with those of DOI.

Slaughter reported that a possible move of AFS to Fairbanks International Airport is being explored, due to mounting space issues and decreased staffing at Fort Wainwright, among other things. If the move takes place, it is likely to be expensive.

RAC members **Cain** and **PJ Simon** expressed concern with low participation from village residents on firefighting crews. **Slaughter** replied that he sympathized with their concerns, but that the number of available, trained firefighters from the villages was not adequate to support their deployment this summer.

Erika Reed, BLM Alaska Division of Land Transfer and Cadastral Survey Acting Deputy State Director, and **Mike Schoder, BLM Alaska Supervisory Land Manager**, presented on Direct Point Positioning Surveys (DPPS) for State of Alaska patents. The Statehood Act resulted in ca. 105 million acres to be conveyed; Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) resulted in ca. 42 million acres to be conveyed. There are approximately 25 million acres remaining to be conveyed to the state. DPPS should represent a significant savings, and speed up the process of surveying those remaining lands.

Cain enquired as to the State's response to BLM's proposed implementation of DPPS. **Schoder** replied that there have been some concerns, and that the State has requested an external review of the program by the American Society of Surveyors. **Reed** stated that BLM has invited the State to dialogue on the issue.

Cribley related that DPPS represents a huge paradigm shift, which is made more difficult by the fact that it is not the process that people are used to. Accuracy and repeatability are better with DPPS, but people are used to a survey process that relies more heavily on physical markers.

Schoder stated that DPPS is still evidence-based, and that the differences between DPPS and more traditional survey methods are really more perception than reality. Physical markers are still used in DPPS, just not as often (i.e. only when they are very important and truly useful).

Reed described that, using current methods, it will likely take 10-30 years to survey the ca. 25 million acres of land yet to be conveyed to the State. DPPS would likely reduce that estimate dramatically. Chair **Martin** asked who would be responsible for fixing surveying errors later on. **Schoder** replied that BLM bears responsibility for survey on all federal interest lands.

Chair **Martin** enquired whether BLM manages lands selected for conveyance until the point at which they have been conveyed. **Reed** responded that, as long as they were BLM managed lands to begin with, then yes.

Chair **Martin** clarified that her question was primarily concerned with subsistence regulations and the confusion that ensues when land status is not clear (e.g. lands that have been selected by the State, but not yet conveyed by BLM). **Cribley** replied that federal subsistence regulations do not apply on lands that have been selected for conveyance by the State. On those lands, State subsistence regulations apply. Chair **Martin** responded her concern is that, for people on the ground taking part in subsistence activities, this situation is very confusing and it is difficult to always know which set of rules are in effect in a particular location. People who believe they are following the applicable regulations are being cited because it is not clear whether State or federal rules apply to the area in which they are using.

BREAK

Stacie McIntosh, BLM Alaska Arctic Field Office Manager, presented on the Regional Mitigation Strategy (RMS) for Northeast NPR-A. More information on the RMS in NPR-A can be found at <http://www.blm.gov/ak/st/en/prog/NPR-A/RMS.html>. Using this strategy, compensatory mitigation is now an option, rather than avoidance or minimization only. RMS is a strategy, not a decision. \$8 million from ConocoPhillips has been allocated for potential compensatory mitigation purposes. This RMS will serve as a roadmap for mitigating impacts that cannot be avoided or sufficiently minimized.

McIntosh advised the RAC that one way in which the RAC can contribute to the RMS development process is to answer the questions that she distributed before the presentation, and to report back not only answers, but opinions as to whether there are any questions on the list that should not be asked, or should be reworded, or if the questions should be weighted. It would be ideal if the RAC's responses were received by January 5. **Wald** asked if it would still be helpful if RAC members provided individual responses to the questions, rather than responding as a group. **McIntosh** replied yes.

Foo enquired as to whether this RMS would serve as a model for developments in NPR-A only, or for projects statewide as well. **Cribley** responded that the NPR-A RMS is a pilot project, and that the model could possibly be applied statewide.

Foo enquired as to how compensation value would be determined. **McIntosh** indicated that, though there are some ideas, this question has not yet definitively been answered.

John Hopson, Jr. stated:

- Many people living in the area of NPR-A see this RMS as overreach on the part of BLM, and that the strategy should be restrained to a smaller area only involving GMT1 lands.
- Since the Record of Decision (ROD) in question only applies to GMT1, so should the proposed RMS (and only to BLM managed lands within GMT1). Since this RMS is a pilot, it is important not to set a precedent of overreaching, since doing so could discourage support of the strategy in subsequent areas.

Cribley related that other organizations and companies have mitigation-intended funds as well, often related to Section 404 permits, but are unclear about how and when to use them.

Wald enquired as to whether Section 404 permit funds could be used to clean up Legacy wells. **Cribley** answered that they could be, but BLM is being very careful about that, since the financial demands of Legacy well cleanup are so high (i.e. 404-related mitigation funds could be completely exhausted by Legacy well cleanup, leaving nothing for mitigation efforts). Other federal funds are being sought for Legacy well cleanup, since they are the responsibility of the federal government.

Cribley described that BLM is trying to arrive at a consistent strategy for mitigation, rather than a hodgepodge of efforts that depend on the specifics of a project or activity.

Wald stated that finding a consistent strategy is difficult, since the vision for exactly what will happen in NPR-A over the next ca. 20 years is unclear. **Cribley** replied that that is true, and BLM is hoping to consult with ConocoPhillips to begin addressing that issue.

Cribley described that there is a bottleneck of North Slope-related 404 permit mitigation funds, because appropriate projects have been difficult to identify. All projects proposed up to this point have been prevented by Army Corps of Engineers (COE) regulations. Hopefully, the RMS will facilitate easier use of mitigation funds.

BREAK

Heppler and **Tim Hammond, BLM Alaska Central Yukon Field Office Supervisory Physical Scientist** (via teleconference), presented on the vision for future planning efforts in the Dalton Highway Corridor.

RAC member **Warren Olson** asked if BLM is involved in predator control decision relating to the Dall sheep population. **Heppler** replied that no, those are decisions for the Alaska Department of Fish & Game.

Wald remarked that a six month lead time on sheep hunt guiding permits seems very short, and that something more like 18 months would be more realistic. **Hammond** replied that six months is a minimum, not a maximum. Permit requests were being submitted with as little as two weeks' notice, which left insufficient time for their impacts to be assessed, so the six months minimum lead time was implemented. Permit requests can be submitted as much as two years in advance.

The next agenda item was subcommittee creation possibilities.

Cribley remarked that Central Yukon and Bearing Sea-Western Interior subcommittees could be helpful.

Foo reminded the group that the previous day's Placer Mining Subcommittee motion was passed.

Cribley asked if the RAC would like to form a subcommittee to address the RMS questions, to go along with RAC members providing their individual feedback. Chair **Martin** replied that, since the RMS is a new process, it would be better if the entire RAC is involved, rather than a subcommittee. **Ristroph** asked if it would still be possible to pursue input on the issue outside the RAC with no subcommittee. Chair **Martin** answered advice outside the RAC could still be pursued.

Cribley enquired as to whether input from the RAC would be more helpful to the RMS process before or after the next RMS workshop. **McIntosh** indicated that after the workshop would probably be most helpful.

Chair **Martin** asked for volunteers for the Central Yukon Subcommittee. Members **Martin, Simon,** and **Billingsley** volunteered.

Chair **Martin** asked for volunteers for the Bering Sea-Western Interior Subcommittee. Chair **Martin** nominated RAC absentee Chair **Suzanne Little**; members **Hopson, Barr and Foo** volunteered.

RAC member **Cain** suggested an ANCSA Subcommittee. After some discussion, the RAC agreed to form this subcommittee. **Martin, Cain, Brown** and **Simon** volunteered. RAC member **Barr** nominated non-RAC member **Jeff Nelson**.

Citing his volunteering for the ANCSA Subcommittee, RAC member **Simon** asked to be removed from the Placer Mining Subcommittee, and to have his place taken by non-RAC member **Ray Richards** from Doyon. The members of the Placer Mining Subcommittee now include **Morrison, Foo, Barr, and Ray Richards**.

MOTION: Regarding the question of RAC Chair, RAC member **Cain** moved that, pending her reappointment to the RAC, **Suzanne Little** continue as RAC Chair. RAC member **Billingsley** seconded. Motion passed.

MOTION: Regarding the question of RAC Vice Chair, RAC member **Cain** moved that **Kathryn Martin** continue as Vice Chair. RAC member **Foo** seconded. Motion passed.

RAC 2016 meeting development: RAC member **Brown** remarked that it seems most efficient to schedule the spring RAC meeting to directly follow the next Northeast NPR-A RMS workshop, so that RAC members could attend both meetings in one trip. **Cribley** pointed out that the RAC needs to ensure that a quorum is present at that meeting, so that their recommendations can be used by the BLM. After some discussion of scheduling the next RAC meeting to directly follow the next RMS workshop, Chair **Martin** indicated her impression was that the group was in agreement to do so.

Ristroph suggested that, if BLM doesn't establish an Adaptation/Climate Change Subcommittee, that anyone on the RAC or any of the RAC's subcommittees should feel free to contact her regarding adaptation/climate change matters and questions.

Simon led discussion on the cleanup status of an Air Force communications facility at Indian Mountain.

RAC 2016 field trip opportunities: **Cribley** suggested two possibilities: the Jack Wade Creek Project site and the Dalton Highway (via the Arctic Interagency Visitor Center in Coldfoot). After some discussion, the RAC agreed that the Placer Mining Subcommittee would visit the Jack Wade Creek site, and that the RAC as a whole would make the Dalton Highway trip. A tentative summer RAC meeting is planned at the Arctic Interagency Visitor Center, in combination with the Dalton Highway field trip, during the week beginning June 28, 2016. No tentative date was suggested for the Jack Wade Creek Project site visit.

After some discussion, the RAC agreed that a fall meeting of the RAC will tentatively be planned during the week beginning October 24, 2016, probably in Anchorage.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:50pm.