

Western Montana Resource Advisory Council Minutes

May 18, 2016

Dillon Field Office

BLM Western Zone Staff Present: David Abrams, Cornie Hudson, Joe Ashor, Corey Meier, Rick Hotaling

RAC Members Present: Jean Belangie-Nye, Nichole Brown, Margaret Gorski, Jim Hart, Larry Hoffman, Koy Holland, David Krueger, Doug Midgett, Paul Putz, Mark Sweeney, Ron Tussing, Bob Walker, Chair.

RAC Members Absent: Dan Happel, Bob Martinka, Whitney Tilt.

Guests and Presenters: Patrick Webb, Senator Daines' representative in Helena; Stephanie Hester, Committee Coordinator for the Governor's Invasive Species Advisory Committee; Jeff Ward, Recreation Business Program Manager, U.S. Forest Service; plus representatives from the Recreation Program for the Flathead and Lewis and Clark/Helena National Forests.

RAC Coordinator David Abrams opened the RAC meeting at 9:00 a.m. with a welcome, agenda review, travel form information and a review of last meeting's action items. He mentioned that the RAC nomination process will open soon. BLM received just enough applications for the current vacant positions but also needs alternate candidates to send forward. He encouraged current RAC members to talk to the groups and organizations they represent and encourage others to apply. Bob Walker said to encourage applicants to identify all their skills on the application because they may be qualified for more than one category of interest.

Action Items from Previous Meeting: Update on Ruby Reservoir access, Revenue Flats bike trail proposal, Copper City bike trail proposal; the recreation fee subgroup did not meet so there will be no report this meeting.

Missoula RMP Public Listening Sessions

Field Manager Joe Ashor reminded the group that the MFO is in the process of revising their 30-year-old management plan, which is long overdue. They are using the Planning 2.0 process with the following goals:

- Improve collaboration/public engagement
- Improve ability to address landscape scale resource issues (MFO is a relatively small player in the middle of other major landowners)
- Improve plan's ability to respond to future change (e.g. mountain pine beetle)

Envisioning is a pre-scoping process for the planning effort. The schedule for MFO is as follows:

- Situation assessment (March 1-4); sent out 130 letters to stakeholders; held listening sessions in Missoula, Ovando, Philipsburg, and Seeley Lake. Talked to about 50 people.
- Public workshops (April 12-14); MFO held workshops using facilitators in Philipsburg, Missoula, and Potomac. The workshops were designed to share with the public what BLM heard in the listening sessions and to continue listening to management suggestions. The workshops also provided opportunity for the public to engage with each other and increase understanding among users.

Larry asked if the Montana Mining Association had been invited. Joe said yes and that an Antonioli came to the Philipsburg meeting and left a statement. Ted Antonioli (former RAC member) attended the Missoula meeting.

The situation assessment (provided to the RAC) was compiled from the listening sessions. No tape recordings or paper recordings were made at the meetings.

Themes from the listening sessions: in general, perspectives were gathered on being part of the listening session, perspectives on public lands and perspectives on outreach and relationships. Specific categories included ecological sustainability, access, recreation opportunities, river uses, range management, noxious weeds control, forest management, mining, and land acquisition.

Margaret asked about providing comments relevant to the decision. Joe mentioned it was hard to get input for the 30,000-foot-view level of decision. Most input provided was site or resource specific which will be more useful later in the planning process. Joe said his staff is keeping good records so the input is not lost.

Doug asked about the next step. Joe said the next step in the planning process is to hold listening sessions with all the cooperating agencies (FWP, Forest Service, USFWS, Counties, State, etc.). Public scoping will be held in October.

Cornie suggested keeping a list of specific comments and append the document with specifics so they aren't lost. Margaret said (as an example) if many comments dealt with a specific recreation use, then that is relevant for landscape level planning. Jean B-N said that within specific comments, there were broad applications such as sensibility that could be applied to landscape level planning.

Rick reiterated that the purpose of the meetings was to listen to the public without judgement or debate. Joe said the objectives of the public workshops were to share the proposed planning process, listen to public land users, and to provide people opportunity to engage with each other.

Landscape approach and how it will be applied in the MFO: Joe said the planning area encompasses nine counties with BLM subsurface and the surface acreage is contained primarily within three counties (Granite, Powell and Missoula), where planning efforts will be concentrated. MFO is a small piece of the puzzle overall and BLM doesn't want to conflict with the objectives of other planning partners (USFS, Tribal governments, Crown of the Continent Eco-Regions, Blackfoot Challenge, State, Counties, and Nature Conservancy).

The next step is to meet with Cooperating Agencies (May/June 2016), Tribes (May/June, 2016), followed by public scoping in October 2016.

Larry asked about the purpose of not taking notes or recording the listening sessions. Joe said the comments were captured by facilitators and BLM staff after the meetings, and then they went back to the participants and asked if they captured their thoughts accurately.

Governor's Invasive Species Advisory Committee

Stephanie Hester from DNRC, Committee Coordinator, said that the Montana Invasive Species Advisory Council was created through an executive order signed in December, 2014. The purpose of the committee is to provide recommendations and directions and planning for invasive species. Stephanie said additional information on direction and expectations are found on the committee website on the DNRC page.

Their vision is to be the driving and coordinating force for prevention and management of invasive species in Montana. It is an all-taxa committee which means it deals with ALL invasives, plants, animals, pests, and pathogens. The committee had no funding and a two-year deadline. The committee developed a work plan with the following three priorities:

- Assessments – what is going on throughout the state?
- Conduct an invasive species summit to vet assessment results.
- Deliver a strategic framework to the Governor with recommendations.

The assessment is 76 pages and can be found on the website (dnrc.mt.gov/divisions/cardd/MISAC). It includes information from 112 respondents from 78 entities (mostly agencies).

The summit held April 13-14 had nearly 200 participants. The summit report has been finalized and is also available via the web. The assessment and Summit identified that prevention and monitoring are the two biggest challenges regarding Montana's invasive species efforts. Funding is the biggest obstacle, followed by coordination among entities. Currently, the committee is working to develop a strategic framework and identifying legislative needs for the upcoming session. One of short-term priorities is to renew MISAC or identify another coordinating body to serve as the "clearinghouse" for MT's invasive species issues.

Stephanie said that the committee is interested in "bolstering Montana's perimeter defense" to keep invasives from entering the state in the first place. One recommendation has been to secure our borders by changing the aquatic check stations to invasive species check stations and keeping longer hours.

The next step is a committee meeting on May 24 at the Capitol, room 152 starting at 10 a.m. The committee hopes to finalize a consensus on priorities and develop a scope of work for the strategic framework. An RFP for the plan will be out in early June. Stephanie said the Council has raised approximately \$100,000 \$100K to fund the priorities. Additional listening sessions and a Tribal outreach are planned to help better inform the framework.

Two other items of note:

- 1) MISAC produces an e-newsletter (Invasive Species Bulletin) on invasive species that includes MISAC updates. Contact Stephanie to subscribe.
- 2) MISAC is hosting a webinar on June 13 from 10-11 am to discuss the top priorities resulting from the process thus far. Information about call/log-in instructions will be sent through the Invasive Species Bulletin.

Koy asked who will be the lead agency. Stephanie said that needs to be determined.

Bob stated that the lack of coordination among agencies is a continuing problem.

Jean B-N asked if \$100K in funding was enough. Stephanie said the \$100K is only for the coordinating body and they need more research to determine what is actually needed to properly fund invasive species efforts in the state.

Cornie said she and Floyd Thompson went to a national meeting in Idaho on invasive species and basically the same problems with species and coordination exist there with each entity keeping their own data. Cornie said weeds needs its own funding code rather than pulling money from other programs.

Margaret asked if there is a model for coordination among agencies that is successful that we could duplicate. Mark said it's always a challenge to see which agency has the authority to lead. Stephanie

said in the summit they had researched successful partnerships models (Blackfoot Challenge, Salt Cedar Team). Contact Stephanie to be added to invasive species newsletter mailing list.

Recreation Fee Proposals

Jeff Ward, USFS Recreation Business Program Manager, gave RAC member handouts which included fee proposal increases, two from the Flathead NF and two from the Helena NF.

Jeff introduced Sadie from the Flathead NF who gave an overview of the Flathead cabin rental program which includes 14 cabins with varying amenities and price ranges with a 90% summer occupancy rate. She reviewed the proposal for the **Anna Creek Cabin** located 30 miles south of Hungry Horse and about halfway to Spotted Bear Ranger Station. The cabin is accessible by snowmobile in winter and vehicles in the summer with lots of activities available in the surrounding area.

Anna Creek Cabin was built in 1953 by the Bureau of Reclamation and decommissioned in 2010. When the extensive renovation is complete, the FS wants to charge \$75/night and expects projected revenue of \$12K-\$15K annually which will go back into the rental program for operation and maintenance. Sadie said the cabin rental program brings a different demographic to the Forest – those that don't want or can't camp in traditional ways. It is not handicap accessible now but will be in the future. Public feedback has been favorable.

Paul asked about demographic data. Sadie said no but they have a good feel for the demographics from the renters and public feedback. The FS doesn't want to directly compete with the private sector but most private facilities have more amenities such as hot water, showers, etc.

Paul asked about the deferred maintenance figure. Sadie said high-ticket items (roof, deck, etc.) go on the list after a certain amount of time whether it is still functional or not.

Sadie said the FS had to limit camping at another site to accommodate the capacity at the Anna Creek Cabin due to the grizzly bear conservation strategy. Koy moved and Mark seconded to bring Anna Creek Cabin into the rental system at \$75/night. Passed unanimously and will take effect six months after publication in the Federal Register (2/1/16). The cabin should be available on August 1.

The second Flathead proposal is the **Star Meadows** cabin and bunkhouse fee increase from the \$40 current fee to \$75/night. The cabin is located on Tally Lake about 25 miles west of Whitefish. In 2010 the tool shed was converted to a bunkhouse to increase the sleeping capacity to 10. The cabin fee hasn't been raised since 2001 even though amenities and capacity have changed. Other amenities include better furniture, dog kennel, and horseshoe pits.

This cabin has mixed feedback from the public related to the fee increase but the FS felt the fee should have been incrementally raised over the years and it is fairly priced at \$75/night. The bunkhouse can't be split out in the reservation system since it is one site.

Larry asked about housekeeping. Sadie said either seasonals, volunteers, or permanent staff cleans the cabins between users. The motion was made and seconded to increase the fee from \$40 to \$75/night. It passed unanimously.

Jeff said many of the FS recreation fees have not changed since the 1990s. They are behind in fee increase requests for a number of reasons.

Josh from the Lincoln Ranger District of the Helena NF presented two new fee proposals: **the Granite Butte Lookout** on the Continental Divide between Helena and Lincoln offers views, hiking, and is

accessible by 4WD vehicle in the summer and snowmobile in winter. The cabin is ready to rent once the lightning protection system is in place.

Miller Cabin is east of Canyon Ferry reservoir near Confederate Gulch. There are motorized and non-motorized trails nearby. Both cabins were developed through partnerships, volunteer labor, and grants. The FS is proposing a fee of \$45/night for each cabin. Most public comments were supportive of the \$45 fee – they have wood stoves, vault toilets, and are historically accurate. The cabins should be available for public rental by late August.

Bob asked about the number of lookouts available for rent. Jeff estimated about 20. Many of the lookouts deteriorated beyond repair. There is now a lookout friends group that has increased interest in the facilities.

Paul doesn't want low-income people priced out of rental market and stated public land cabins shouldn't be in competition with private enterprises since they belong to the people of the U.S. Public cabins/lookouts are totally different experiences. Doug said private enterprises depend on profit whereas publicly owned facilities are built on public land and partially public funds. He also raised the issue of concessionaire campgrounds where the manager has no investment besides maintenance.

Mark moved and seconded by Koy to accept the fee proposals for Granite Peak and Miller Cabin at \$45/night. Motion was approved.

David called for **public comment at 11:30**. Patrick Webb, Senator Daines' representative from Helena introduced himself.

There was no other public comment.

Margaret followed up on Doug's comment regarding concessionaire managed campgrounds. She said the Northern Region has the lowest-funded recreation program in the nation. With more funding from Congress the rental fees would not need to be raised. Paul thought money for the cabin rental program could be raised in other ways.

Jeff Ward said that recently there was a survey completed on the Clearwater/Nez Perce regarding recreation fees where three options were given to the public which included 1) reducing services (closing sites), 2) issuing a prospectus for a concessionaire, or 3) raising fees. Overwhelmingly, the response was that they didn't want a concessionaire-run campground and they didn't want to close recreation sites. Raising fees was the only viable option. Jeff does understand that concessionaires are not always popular.

Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Update

Rick Hotaling said the LWCF program has been in place for a long time. It was started in the late 60s or early 70s with funds generated from the off-shore oil and gas leasing royalties. The on-shore oil and gas leasing portion (BLM's management) has a more complicated funding formula. Congress decided a portion of the funds would go to the U.S. Treasury and a portion for acquisitions and state grants to fund habitat and wildlife opportunities. Some projects require matching funds and others are used as grants for urban green spaces such as city parks.

LWCF can be both mandatory (usually to states) and discretionary to Federal agencies (BLM, FS, Park Service, FWS, BOR). Now the acquisition portion is separated from access related projects. Collaborative groups can also apply (e.g. High Divide, Crown of the Continent).

Each agency and department prioritizes their proposals and sends the lists to Congress. Congress decides on priorities and how much is funded and that becomes the LWCF budget for the year. BLM received no funding in 2016 for access and acquisition. BLM Montana's priority is the High Divide Collaborative area in Dillon. Often the projects are funded in stages.

When Congress reauthorized LWCF it was only for three years – FY 2016, 17 and 18, but it has constraints. The future of the funding is currently under discussion.

Secretary of Interior, Sally Jewell, was in Montana three weeks ago at Devil's Elbow Campground on Hauser Lake to celebrate recreation and access and the benefit to the local economy. A portion of Devil's Elbow was funded through LWCF. Across Hauser Lake lies the Ward Ranch, also an LWCF acquisition. The Iron Mask Ranch in the Elkhorns was originally requested by the FS but Congress shifted it to BLM so the FS boundary wouldn't have to be administratively changed. LWCF has provided public access and kept several areas from being subdivided. A list of proposed projects broken out by agencies is available on the website.

Margaret asked if there was public involvement by the agencies in developing the priority list. Rick said not from the agencies but the State grant requests have public involvement. Rick said acquisitions always have to have wide public support. Margaret said LWCF was in jeopardy for a few months and she thanked the Montana Congressional Delegation for their support.

Break for Lunch

Field Office Updates

Butte Field Office – Corey Meier, Acting Field Manager:

- Secretary Jewell's visit to the BFO went really well.
- Alta Headframe needed a home and Butte Silver Bow had it for a time and now has found a home at the World Museum of Mining.
- Copper City Bike Trail is a proposal from a Bozeman based mountain bike group. BFO is currently doing travel planning in Park, Gallatin, and southern Broadwater Counties and the proposal will be analyzed as part of that effort.
- Regarding the recreation subgroup that was dealing with the parking issue at Holter Lake, Corey will visit with the subgroup after the RAC meeting and follow-up. Corey would like to have something in place by next field season.
- Appreciated the efforts of the forestry subgroup and BFO is making good use of their recommendations. BLM is working with the FS to treat 1,500 acres of BLM in the Colorado Gulch area west of Helena. Seymour Salvage (29 acres salvage) and Clancy WUI are recent projects. Deno Creek in the upper Big Hole is also being worked on.
- LaMarche Salvage – currently working on the NEPA and it contains an estimated 14K tons of salvage sawlogs, post and poles, firewood.
- NEPA is currently underway in the Marysville area.
- The next watershed assessment scheduled is the Boulder area so there will be seasonal crews in the area this year doing inventory and assessment.
- BFO hasn't had a forestry regeneration crew for a long time but this year a seasonal crew has been hired and they will be doing surveys primarily in the Big Hole but also other FO work.

- Stamp Mill in Indian Creek – Corey reported that BFO archeologist Carrie Kiely received agreement from the SHPO office on eligibility. Now BFO can submit projects for funding into the budget cycle.
- BFO has adjusted some of the watershed boundaries to distribute the work load and keep allotments intact.
- Iron Mask mine and mill site out of Townsend is a big project. Working with the Corps of Engineers for some reclamation design. Would like to start this summer.
- Weeds – BFO has planned 23 spray days this summer and BFO continues to work closely with the counties.

Margaret asked about Alta Headframe and Larry related the history of the headframe. It should be reconstructed at the World Museum of Mining by this fall.

Bob asked about the bullet statement regarding two miles of additional trail being constructed in the Sheep Mountain area near Clancy. Corey said NOHVCC is partnering with BLM to construct the trail as part of a national trails workshop.

Koy asked about the sage grouse burn in the Soap Gulch area. Corey said extra funding became available this year and the DFO had completed the NEPA last year as part of the land health assessment. The goal of the project is to improve sage habitat by burning conifer encroachment.

Corey said there is another prescribed burn planned in the Whiskey Gulch area. The Jefferson watershed committee is trying to put together a multi-jurisdictional burn with grant money from the DNRC. BLM has NEPA completed for the area.

Bob asked about a funding request for the Carbella Recreation Site along the Yellowstone River north of Gardiner. Corey said an LWCF request had been submitted but not approved; it will be resubmitted. RMEF is looking to pick up some private land in the area for access and wildlife habitat. Corey said Carbella provides one of the few public access points between Livingston and Yellowstone NP.

Mark asked about the timber sales and access/gates. Corey said the only sales that needed access agreements were the Seymour Salvage and the LaMarche Salvage sales. The contractors secured their own access.

Mark asked about the Holter Lake Lodge occupancy lease on the north side of the old bar and grill. The bar burned down. A condominium development is proposed for nearby private land so the nature of the occupancy lease changed necessitating an EA rather than a categorical exclusion renewal. BLM made the decision to renew the lease since the footprint would not change but it would now be used for parking, water well, and docks along the lake front. The lease would be to private owners. Corey said the only other commercial occupancy lease for Butte FO is the Great Divide Ski Area near Helena.

Missoula FO Update – Joe Ashor:

- LWCF acquisition north of the Blackfoot River east of Missoula in the Belmont Creek/Sunflower Mountain area – 5,500-acre acquisition with the Nature Conservancy using money received in FY2014 (\$3.5 million of LWCF). Appraisal process is started and hope to close by the end of 2016 or early 2017.
- Discovery Basin Ski Road is still under construction on the south side of the creek. The contractors ran into large boulders which slowed their progress. No activity is allowed from 6/1-7/15 due to nesting of sensitive-species birds. Hope to complete the road by winter.

- Watershed assessments – Lower Blackfoot corridor is due for reassessment this year and BLM will look at prescribed fire and/or thinning to create open areas.
- MFO has a meeting tomorrow with the International Mountain Bike Association to discuss proposals in the Gold Creek area.
- Personnel – a new forester, Kyle Johnson, from Coos Bay Oregon BLM is due to start mid-June. He previously worked for DNRC in Plains, MT.

Margaret asked if Discovery Basin was contributing to the maintenance of the new road when it is completed. Note: The following information was provided by Joe after the meeting to clarify the responsibilities. *The road is controlled by BLM, however Discovery has a Right of Way grant to construct, use, operate and maintain the road across BLM. Discovery will maintain the road according to the stipulations of the Right of Way Grant. If Discovery contracts out to a third party to maintain the road, e.g. the County, they can do that. However, Discovery is still responsible for the road being maintained according to the stipulations and would be the contact for BLM. If the County was to take over the road sometime in the future, there would be an assignment of the Right of Way to the County and NEPA would be involved.*

The new road will cut off about 20 miles for skiers from the Missoula/Drummond area.

Bob mentioned a fall meeting in Missoula with a field trip. Joe would suggest a visit to Garnet Ghost Town and recreation sites along the Lower Blackfoot corridor.

Dillon Field Office – Cornie Hudson:

- Revenue Flats proposed mountain bike trail – located in the Norris/McAllister area, Cornie will meet on the ground with bicycle groups to look seriously about where trails could be located followed by a NEPA document with alternatives completed over the winter. Traffic counters are in place and Cornie was surprised by the amount of traffic, sometimes 100 vehicles per day. Jim said the area gets so much use that he encouraged BLM to complete a management plan for the area. Cornie said they have committed to the mountain bike group to do the NEPA for their proposal but BLM needs to complete a comprehensive recreation plan.
- Ruby Reservoir - the LWCF boat launch project was submitted but not approved for LWCF funding but had lots of support. BLM is not invested in the project until there is a cooperating property owner and that is not the case. After meeting with the county, it was decided that the area needs an appraisal. At the Ruby Reservoir there are two separate plots and she thought Madison County may be willing to pay for the appraisal. Several non-government organizations (NGOs) are interested and BLM is happy to manage the area once it's finalized.
- Watershed Assessments – last year BLM assessed Big Sheep and Sage Creek watersheds. Those EAs should be out in the next month for public review. Decisions on those should be made this fall. Watershed assessments for this year include the South Tobacco Roots and Blacktail.
- East Fork of the Blacktail – BLM has a small camping area at the end of the road adjacent to the Rob Ledford Game Range, a very popular area for hunting and horn hunting. The land ownership is intermingled but it is a FS road. Last year the two bridges on the road were inspected and deemed not safe. The upper bridge is okay for a few years but the lower bridge was condemned. Bumpers were installed on the lower bridge but they were only 8 feet wide which prevented campers and trailers from accessing the area. After discussions, the bumpers will now be widened to 9.5 feet to accommodate trailers and then determine how to replace the bridges for the long term.

- Travel Management Handout – BLM staff held a brainstorming session to come up with ideas on “How can BLM help the public follow the OHV rules”? Cornie has been involved in a travel management interagency working group (FWP, DNRC, FS, Counties) that targeted Big Sheep and Sage Creek areas in fall of 2015. The interagency group chose those areas because many of the continuing violations occur there. Agencies increased patrols, had extra law enforcement from all the agencies and that effort will continue. Trying to focus on better communication with the users.

In January, Cornie’s staff brainstormed ideas on ways to curb the violations. Emphasis areas included an interagency news release, better maps and kiosks on site and letter sized hand out maps, signing roads closed to let users know which roads are closed and why, barricade or block roads where unauthorized use is rampant, more focused and visible patrols especially during hunting season, education at access points through kiosks and maps, re-evaluate open/closed routes during watershed assessments and change where necessary to meet objectives and provide incentives for law abiding citizens (car wash, thank you notes). BLM will ask permittees to minimize travel on closed routes especially just before hunting season.

Travel violations continue to be a problem. Last year several tickets were issued for off-road game retrieval and BLM will try to bring in extra law enforcement and FWP appreciates the help. Cornie feels like BLM needs to make it really clear on the ground so there is no question about where people can legally drive.

Cornie asked the RAC if they would be willing to form a subgroup to help tackle this problem – it is a wildlife protection and a weed issue and OHV use is definitely on the increase. Discussion followed on phone apps (Avenza) and other methods but BLM doesn’t have much data in the app. Corey said the Pipestone OHV area is populated on Avenza.

Doug said most people don’t know how to read paper maps so recreationists need to have something they can use and BLM needs to keep information updated. Koy said not all apps work at a given location.

Margaret said the Blue Mountain area near Missoula has a digital kiosk but didn’t know how it would hold up to vandalism.

Bob asked the RAC if they have an interest in forming a travel management subgroup. Ron Tussing is interested; Larry Hoffman is interested in participating via email. Rick said that subgroups can have individuals outside the RAC participate. Rick said usually when a subgroup is formed; BLM is asking the RAC to work on an issue and report back and he’s not sure that this issue conforms to that. Input from the RAC could come during a meeting or even emails with a response request.

Jean said it’s a regional or even state-wide issue and other areas may have ideas that have been successful.

Bob said he is also interested on working on this issue and thought NOHVACC (Russ Ehnes, Great Falls) should be involved since their goal is OHV education. Bob suggested Cornie contact Russ to help develop alternatives. We won’t call it a subgroup but Ron, Bob, and hopefully Russ will work with Cornie. Margaret said she would be okay with devoting some time during a RAC meeting to work on the issue.

RAC Feedback to BLM

Larry commented that he had just completed the underground entry training for BLM and other government agencies and participants expressed that there was a lot of “gray hair” going out the door in federal agencies (BLM & FS) and not enough protocols and information were being left behind. Rick responded that that is absolutely right; we are losing corporate knowledge as people retire. We are trying to overlap positions but budget is the issue. Rick said employees are encouraged to write down historical information and protocols but that is hard when some positions remain vacant for several months.

Bob reported on the last BLM State Director’s meeting with Jamie Connell on April 22. Bob shared current topics from the Western MT Zone. He listened to BLM’s two-hour webinar on the Planning 2.0 process. He also attended the Invasive Species Summit and said it was two days that were well spent.

Bob reminded the RAC that at the fall meeting, they need to elect a chair and co-chair. David asked members to be thinking about it because both Bob and Mark go off the council.

Joe responded to the comment on the Planning 2.0 process and whether it was more or less efficient than the current process. He felt spending time upfront with constituents and building those relationships is time well spent so there are no surprises at the end of the process. Jim said he felt it is the right thing to do even if it takes more time. Jean said current technology makes it easier to disseminate information to a wide variety of people so people not at the meeting can still participate and provide feedback.

Margaret asked about climate change and wondered if it translated in direction coming down from agencies and how they are being asked to respond. She wondered if it might be worth a discussion topic on the agenda at a future meeting. Rick said right now it’s being addressed but the direction varies from program to program. Margaret wondered what direction is being given related to a specific resource. Jean asked about carbon sequestration. Rick said it’s a DOI program but the direction has changed over time. Rick mentioned BFO’s geologist David Williams and said he gives an informative presentation on climate change which got a lot of people talking about the issue. Rick offered David’s presentation to the RAC.

Next Meeting Date: October 13 (meeting) and 14 (field trip), Missoula FO

Agenda Topics:

- Election of Officers
- Annual Weed Report
- Field Trip Preview
- David William’s Climate Change Presentation
- Report from informal working group (off-route issue with Russ Ehnes)
- Recreation Fee Subgroup Report

Meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Approved by: _____ Date: _____

Bob Walker, Chairperson