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**Bureau of Land Management
Boise District Resource Advisory Council (RAC) Meeting
January 9, 2020
BLM Boise District Office
3948 Development Avenue, Boise, Idaho 83705**

MEETING NOTES

Boise District RAC Members Present

Michael Gibson, Donna Bennett, Zach Funkhouser, Rick Raymondi, Scott Nichols, Art Talsma, Eric Yensen Ph.D, Joe Merrick, and Jeff Buck.

Public Attending

Brooke Jacobson, Josh Uriarte, Marde Mensinger, Katie Fite, and Dirk Mendive. Brieanah Schwartz, Esq. requested one-time call-in conference line to attend meeting. Line was opened at 9:05 and closed at conclusion of meeting.

BLM Advisory/Staff Present

Lara Douglas, Amanda Hoffman, Brent Ralston, Tanya Thrift, Russ Babiak, Aimee Betts, Donn Christiansen and Caleb Ashby.

Welcome – Lara Douglas, Boise District Manager

- Welcome, introductions and opening remarks.
- Approve draft agenda and notes from last meeting.
- Several RAC members requested better way to hold meetings such as conference call or video conference in the future to make attendance easier. Lara agreed to explore if current regulation allows for virtual meetings.

Four Rivers Field Office – Brent Ralston, Four Rivers Field Manager

- Proposed RMP and Final EIS discussion.
 - Extended public comment period ended September 23, 2019. December 20, 2019, Department review team was briefed.
 - 12,000 public comments were received – mostly form letters addressing wild horse and burro policy, inclusion of ACEC's and identification of a Backcountry Conservation Area.
 - Received 122 individual, unique letters.
 - Idaho Governor's Office and state agencies provided substantive comments on management actions.
 - Proposed RMP/Final EIS NOA to publish in January initiating 30 – day protest and 60 – day Governor's Consistency Review. NOA and Public Notice for Approved RMP/ROD expected April 2020.
- Bennett Mountain North grazing permit discussion.
 - Permits will remain as is until 2026-2027.

Morley Nelson Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area (NCA) – Amanda Hoffman, NCA Manager

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- OCTC real property master plan delayed due to National Guard contracting issue but a draft is expected in mid-February with a 30-day comment period. Decision could be issued by the end of April 2020
- Kuna Cave maintenance project update.
 - Funding was secured to improve the site. Primary design features under evaluation are improvements to the parking area, upgraded ladder system and fencing to prevent illegal dumping in the cave.
 - Draft is expected in March with a decision in May or June of 2020

Bruneau Field Office – Tanya Thrift, Bruneau Field Manager

- Two ongoing permit renewals.
 - One is in the Big Springs allotment. Currently 30 days out from issuing proposed decision. Decision will maintain currently authorized AUMs.
 - Neighboring Chris Black allotment EA is expected to be available for review in February and a proposed decision sometime in the spring.
- Two scheduled annual motorcycle races are to be held near the Grand View area.
 - Special recreation permit is being reviewed for the February 29 – March 1 “Desert Raiders” race.
 - “Desert Rats” race is planned for later in the spring once an application is received.
 - All race routes will follow existing trails.
- Perjue Canyon recreation improvement project decision was signed August 2019 and was not appealed. Funding for the site layout and parking area is being pursued as well as permits with the state to improve the road accessing the site.
- The Oolite recreation site is experiencing a large increase in use and may need a trail system established to control traffic away from rare plant areas.
- Tri-State EIS comment period ended on November 25, 2019 - 184 comments, primarily focused on wildlife habitat issues were received from 40 groups and individuals.
 - Comments are being addressed now and preferred alternative is being developed to address those concerns while balancing large fire threat.
 - Final EIS is expected later in the spring and record of decision will be issued in late spring with a 30-day appeal period.

Owyhee Field Office – Donn Christiansen, Owyhee Field Manager

- Rockville allotment final decision was issued in November with only one appeal from the permittee.
- Silver City allotment final decision was issued December 20, 2019, and appeal period will end the last week of January 2020.
- Bruneau Owyhee Sage grouse Habitat (BOSH) project was signed February 2019 and encompasses 1.67 million acres. Of those acres, 615,000 will be treated.
 - 2019 was first year of implementation with 37,000 acres treated by “lop and scatter” contracts. 40 AIM monitoring plots were established in treatment area to measure effectiveness. First annual report will be published by the end of January 2020.
 - BLM will look into question regarding if and how hydrological recovery monitoring will be conducted within the treatment area.

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- 25,000 to 27,000 acres are scheduled to be treated in 2020 in the Flint Creek area. Implementation changes for FY20 treatments will include some modifications to contracting requirements including additional spacing between materials and specific fence lines to allow livestock movement as well as adequate mobile sanitary and waste facilities and predefined camp/staging sites for contract crews.

Fire & Fuels – Russ Babiak, Boise District Fire Management Officer

- Well below average fire season this year for the District with less than 10,000 acres burned.
- GPS enabled resource tracking and communication systems are starting to be rolled out nationally as well on the district. Full implementation may take several years but will allow real-time tracking of emergency response equipment and personnel.
- Trout Springs prescribed fire project was successfully implemented September 2019 near the Juniper Mountain area.
- Additional treatments in the Trout Springs allotment will begin this year with juniper cutting followed by prescribed fire in two to three years.
- Established fuel breaks will be maintained along roadways as well as within the Paradigm project. Planned treatment area is 8,500 acres and will include mowing, herbicide application and seeding.

General Public Comment Period

- Katie Fite -- Wildlands Defense
 - Requested to give a 15-20 min. presentation at next RAC meeting on the outcomes of the 2019 Trout Springs prescribed fire.

Recreational shooting discussion led by Lara Douglas

- RAC members agreed that the scope of the what can be accomplished by the committee needs to be narrowed before a subcommittee is established.
 - Possible creation of a subcommittee needs to be a reoccurring agenda item.
 - A request was made to send a list of five to ten questions to RAC members to narrow the focus on what should be discussed in the next meeting was made.
- Need to invite guests from recreational shooting and firearm manufacturing community to discuss issues and possible solutions.
 - Education initiative is needed to communicate to the public how severe the problem is.
 - Educational and communication materials such as trifold pamphlets could distributed from retailers.
- Idea was proposed to have a field trip with the entire RAC to high usage problem sites, (Wilson Creek front, Pleasant Valley Rd., Blacks Creek area) as well as to functional sites like Pickle Butte.
- Idaho Power has large interest in shooting due to a huge expense of infrastructure being shot. (Zach Funckhouser)
- Idea was introduced to establish designated areas for shooting. Possibly partner with gun club for management or clean up.

Committee Recommendations

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- Art Talsma nominated Michael Gibson for RAC Chair, Scott Nichols seconded the motion. The vote from the council was unanimous and the motion was approved.
- Michael Gibson nominated Scott Nichols as vice chair, the motion was seconded by Art Talsma. The vote from the council was unanimous and the motion was approved.
- Last meeting minutes from September 5, 2019 were voted on and adopted.
- Subcommittee Statuses
 - Committee agreed to keep the Tri-State subcommittee
 - Committee agreed to keep the Four Rivers RMP subcommittee
- A motion to allow Wildlands Defense to give a 15 min. presentation at next meeting was voted on and adopted.
- Richard (Rick) Raymondi announced he will not be renewing his term after it expires on Jan. 18, 2020

Next RAC meeting will be set for April 23, 2020.

Meeting notes taken by Caleb Ashby, BLM Boise District Public Affairs Specialist (Acting)

Minutes certified by:

Michael Gibson
BDO RAC Chairperson

Date

Lara Douglas
Manager, BDO

Date