

Record of Northern New Mexico Resource Advisory Council (RAC) Meeting

January 19, 2021

Held via Zoom

Meeting start time 9:01am, wait a few minutes for others to join. Quorum at 9:06am

Agency Attendees

Judy Culver: Taos Field Office (TFO) Assistant Field Manager (AFM), Recreation (Acting Field Manager (FM) until Feb)

Dave Mankiewicz: AFM Minerals, Farmington Field Office (FFO)

Allison Sandoval: Public Affairs Specialist, New Mexico State Office (NMSO) BLM, State RAC Coordinator

Sarah Scott: FFO Project Manager, note taker

Jill Aragon: Public Affairs Specialist, FFO, RAC Coordinator

Al Elser: Farmington District Manager, Designated Federal Official (DFO)

Adam Lujan: AFM Rio Puerco Field Office (RPFO), Renewable Resources

Pamela Mathis: Incoming FM for TFO

Elaine Lopez: AFM, Multi Resources, RPFO

Carolyn Russell: Acting FM RPFO (AFM for Multi Resources in Oklahoma Field Office)

Charles Sandau: BLM Ethics Specialist in Billings, MT

Mark Matthews, Acting Albuquerque District Manager,

USFS:

Jeremy Galston, Joanna Wilson, Karen Yori, Eric Garner, Jessica Dunn

RAC members

John Boretsky

Michael (Mick) O'Neill

Cameron Martinez

John Arrington

Charles Price

Peter Castiglia

Larry Hersman

Frank Duran

Richard Sertich

Wilfred Pugh

Peggy McWilliams

Public Attendees: Gordon Glass, James Ramakka, JC Savage, Sharay Dixon (BLM), Jacobo Baca, Hannah Grover (Farmington Daily Times), Mike Eisenfeld, Sherry Popham, Max Henkels, Katie Goetz, Douglas Daubert, Bill Diven, Jim Dumont (U.S. Senator Heinrich staff)

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Elser: introduces self as Farmington District Manager. Northern RAC includes Farmington District, which is Taos and Farmington Field Offices, and the Rio Puerco Field Office. Mark Matthews is current District Manager for RPFO.

1. Panelist introductions (see above), Al also introduced Pamela Mathis, incoming Taos Field Office Field Manager

2. Overview of Charter

Aragon: Overview of Charter (distributed), also available online at BLM.gov website "get involved" link)

- Al Elser is Designated Federal Official (DFO) for first 2 yrs, RAC will be updated when it changes
- Charter will expire in two years

Duran: What is the RAC involvement with NEPA? *E.g.*, as NEPA is being developed, does RAC get to look at prior to decision?

Aragon: Unsure if that is possible for every project, can review with DFO for a plan. The offices have large planning efforts in progress, can look into how the RAC can be more engaged. RPFO and FFO are at tail end of process. RAC will be on distribution list for any upcoming public engagement.

3. RAC 101 Training (required annual training): (See slideshow) Highlights:

- Guiding rules of RAC: General Services Administration (GSA), Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA), 43 CFR 1784
- Three different groups represented: Commodity (grazing, rec, right of way (ROW) holder, timber, energy development), non-commodity (dispersed recreation), public interest (elected official). Members do not represent their own interests but those of the constituency group they represent.
- On June 17, 2020, Sec. Bernhardt signed N NM RAC Charter
- This past year RACs were combined. Northern: FFO, TFO, RPFO, Southern: Pecos District, Las Cruces District and Socorro FO
- Appointing Committee members: based on FACA requirements, reviewed locally, endorsed by State Director, ultimately confirmed by Secretary of Interior.
- Contact info for Al Elser, Mark Matthews, Jill Aragon
- Website for more info

4. Ethics Training. Chuck Sandau, Ethics Counselor with DOI, assigned to BLM Highlights:

- All RAC members must have Ethics training. Lupe Ruiz is a new ethics person assigned to State of NM, incoming in next few weeks, will be primary contact for NM.
- 41 CFR 102-103 and 43 CFR 1784 allow Advisory Committees and provide guidance. RAC charter also provides important guidance.
- RAC members come from public and private sectors, can also include Fed employees or Special Govt. Employees.
- RAC members should provide own judgement in committee deliberations, discuss and deliberate in a matter free from conflicts of interests, must comply with Regs and RAC charter language, RAC members are Representative members.
- Fed ethics laws apply to Fed employees but do not apply to RAC members because RAC members are not Fed employees. Note #13 of the Northern NM RAC Charter. RAC members must avoid conflicts of interests and disclose interests.
- How to handle conflict of interest? one, Notify DFO and two, recuse yourself from that action.
- BLM needs your expertise, need to do that in a way consistent with ethics.
- Any questions can be directed to BLM Ethics team (contact info on last slide of Mr. Sandau's presentation).

23 minute break, back at 10:30am

Aragon: If the committee is interested in having a Bio developed, please send a bio and head shot for me to compile.

5. Travel and Funding of Travel and Engagement

Aragon: When we are able to meet in person, reimbursement is available. Traveling more than 50 mi, being engaged in more than 12 hours of work. Trips usually have a field trip and a discussion day. Will send info on how to submit receipts and info for reimbursement.

Duran: unsure of headcount but would recommend carpooling. Is there a BLM van with BLM driver available?

Aragon: will look into this.

Arrington: Are we under open meetings act as far as having discussions with other members?

Aragon: Will need to research that further. Subcommittee criteria would apply.

O'Neill: Believes RAC can have those.

Arrington: Didn't have full committee though.

Aragon: Will make sure to provide best info.

Pugh: Involved in committees in Abq, as members, they're not required to submit anything for open meeting at unless the intent is to make a decision. A general discussion wouldn't apply. This is for City of Abq, so assume it would apply here too.

Aragon will follow up with guidance concerning open meetings and meetings of less than all RAC members.

6. RAC Chair Nomination

Elser: Informal poll to determine if members need more info to make an informed nomination for RAC chair.

O'Neill: Diverse group, suggests another go-around of intros, then if anyone wants to volunteer they could raise their hands.

Elser: Will go down list for folks to give bio's

Peter Castiglia: Environmental Consultant, water resources consultant in Albuquerque. Much of career working on projects needing BLM approvals. Have been involved in many projects, most projects related to water. Past 10 years in Pecos District to develop potash mining plans. Familiar with BLM process. Served on project for clean-up projects.

Pugh: Could you lay out requirements for the Chair's roles and responsibilities?

Arrington: Peter, would you be interested in the role?

Castiglia: Will wait until Jill explains role.

Peggy McWilliams: Worked in oil and gas (O/G) industry for several years. Worked for operators who drill wells, as well as pipeline companies. Work to secure ROWs. Specialty is working with Tribes - Jicarilla, Navajo, Ute Mtn Ute and Southern Ute. Main point of contact for any issues. Work with Fee landowners, any conflicts I am involved. Must look at both sides to come to agreement. A peacemaker. Husband works on subdivision development. Has served on San Juan Chama Land Management Committee for three years, has been a CPA, active in writing O/G regulations for COPUS, involved in about every aspect of O/G, also involved in gravel. Experienced in securing water rights for companies.

Arrington: Would you be willing to serve?

McWilliams: Wait until hear more about role.

O'Neill: Suggests everyone gives bio to get a better idea of their background.

Elser: Allison, what are the duties and expectations of Chair?

Sandoval: No particular requirements other than preferably they are able to make all meetings. They would work closely with DFO and Jill to set agenda. Everyone would be involved in development but the Chair would help set the agenda. During the meeting, the Chair would be the person that runs the meeting, ensure keeping to agenda, keeps members engaged. Calling for votes. Vice Chair would be the back-up if Chair can't attend.

Fred Pugh: Director of Operations of Albuquerque Convention Center. Oversees 50 person team. 17-year veteran of Air Force. Signed up to represent recreation side; avid outdoorsman. State Director for Veterans Golfers Association. On City of Albuquerque advisory board. Ensure members are adhering to their Charter. Also, President elect of Rotarian committee. Would be interesting, but don't feel he would have time to be Chair for N NM RAC

John Boretsky: Currently guide/outfitter liaison for SCI. Before that, was the Executive Director for NM Council of Outfitters and Guides. Prior to that, career in advertising. Worked with indigenous peoples in SE Asia. Help set up Acoma with paid hunting program. Have worked with NM on conflicts between State and outfitters. In current position, involved with state, provincial and national governments. Normally travelling a great deal.

Larry Hersman: Post-doctoral fellow. Worked on reclamation of mines from a soil perspective. Member of diverse group of scientists at LANL, president of Los Alamos skiers, Skier, Kayaker, term expires this year so may need to bow out of any consideration for Chair.

Mick O'Neill: Retired professor from NMSU, 25 years working in W and E Africa on agriculture research projects. A little in Colombia and a little in India. Superintendent of NM Ag Science Center, then full time researcher. Have been Chairman of RAC previous so would like to see someone else in that role.

Richard Sertich: Background Degree in Environmental Design, a very interdisciplinary approach involving planning. City planning with City of Santa Fe. Managed development and construction of public projects, then to City of Albuquerque. Worked in redevelopment projects. Then to long range planning for City of Albuquerque, then Associate Director for Planning for Albuquerque. Retired then did small stint in commercial development. Volunteer with International Mountain Bicycling Association, Access Foundation, Active in National MS Society. Chair the Albuquerque Chapter and participate with national organization. Biking, skiing, rock climbing, pilates instructor.

John Arrington: Pilot. Served on several boards, represent SWCD as elected official. Term is expiring, need to seek re-election in Nov. Probably couldn't serve as chairman due to limited time. Tuesdays and Wednesdays are best dates for meetings.

Frank Duran: Retired Forester, 33 yrs with US Forest Service (USFS). Started in fire, spent a lot of time in Pacific NW. Program manager for non-timber products. Dabbled in international forestry, Represented USFS in Canada, worked with BLM WO and region in North on coordinating work under different CFRs. Dovetail permitting process. Well-rounded in recreation, timber, fire, international timber. Worker with DOJ on timber related issues.

Cameron Martinez: Served 30 yrs in BIA as forester, silviculturist. Worked for corporation side of Pojoaque Pueblo. Currently at Taos Pueblo, oversee 6 departments: Game and Fish, Ag and Bison, Real estate, Wilderness. Involved in Taos at Miranda Canyon Commission, similar to RAC. Meetings with FS and provide advice on property recently donated to USFS. Also, on board of Rocky Mountain Youth Corps, haven't met Taos BLM folks yet. Knew some back in 90's and 00's though most of those have retired. Currently busy with adjacent communities, quite involved with

area within Enchanted Circle, ensure Pueblos voices are heard, cooperate with USFS and various municipalities. Would support nominated Chair and Vice Chair.

Charles Price: Professional experience has little to do with BLM/public lands (real estate attorney). Relevant experience with boards. Project engineer with AF, business lawyer with real estate. Represented clients in front of public boards. Served on and chair of Albuquerque Landmarks Commission. Retired, ski, hike, backpack, camp, Volunteer for NM Veterans Integration Centers. Family Housing Development Corporation. Volunteer at Petroglyph National Monument.

Al: Any volunteers for RAC Chair?

Charles Price: would be nice to have someone with some experience, suggest nominating Mick O'Neill.

O'Neill: A lot of interest in seeing someone else, would rather have it move around. Preferable a chair from Taos or Rio Puerco so it can be spread around. I would nominate Cameron Martinez.

Elser: Would you be interested Cameron?

Martinez: Appreciate the nomination but quite busy with issues and projects surrounding Taos Pueblo. Don't think can commit.

Castiglia: Nominates Charles, given experience on other boards

Price: Had not anticipated it, would have time to be involved. Willing to do it but would be a learning experience.

Elser: Points out that RAC is a collaborative body. All here to help.

Second: Peggy McWilliams

Elser: Any other nominations or volunteers?

Boretsky: Moves that nominations cease

Second? John Arrington

Price: Vice Chair nominations or volunteers?

Martinez: I volunteer for Vice Chair

O'Neill: nominate Cameron for Vice Chair

Second: John Arrington

Price: any other nominations? None

Vote: Unanimous yes

Retroactive vote for Price for Chair: Unanimous yes

Cameron Martinez elected as Vice Chair and Charles Price votes as Chair

Price: Back to Jill for next item on agenda.

7. Jeremy Galston, USFS:

- Congratulations to new Chair and Vice Chair. Thank you to members of the committee. Appreciate citizens involved in management of public lands
- Will give info only session of fee proposals, and 2 recommendations from Carson
- (See slideshow)

- Seeking recommendations to implement two proposals for Rec Fee Changes:
 - *Amole Group Shelter*: located off high road to Taos. Currently no fee. Proposing \$100/night. Popular site, want to include on Rec.gov for reservations. Currently group sites are closed due to public health orders.
 - *Aldo Leopold Rental Cabin* (Eric Garner gave overview): new site, No Fed or State Agencies in NM offer this type of rental. Nearest public provider of similar opportunity is in CO so limited market comparison. AirB&B and public input let to \$175/night.

Forest is on track and ready to implement once recommendation is approved.

Pugh: Motions for \$175 for Aldo Leopold Cabin

Second: John Arrington, and proposes to move forward

Price: procedural question – do we need to take public comment before action, or can we act now?

Galson: USFS would appreciate hearing public comment

Sandoval: Looking for the recommendation of the RAC, so vote and comment can be done any time.

Price: Open for discussion

Duran: Before rubber stamping, would appreciate a bit more info. Are there other options?

Have questions on rec fee program for R3.

Castiglia: Has additional questions when it's appropriate

Price: Any objections to taking lunch break then further opportunity to discuss

Aragon: Public comments must occur from 1:15-1:45

Price: suggests continuing for another 15 min

O'Neill: No problem

Price: Aldo Leopold for \$175 on table. What other questions do members have?

Duran: On these types of rec fee programs, referred to legislation that allotted funds but unsure how funds would be dispersed, does anyone have more info?

Galston: Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA) was authorized in fall. Intent is focused on deferred maintenance. Pays for materials to do such. Rec fees allow USFS to pay for annual maintenance (toilet pumping, toilet paper, vandalism, etc), those cannot be taken care of via GAOA.

Duran: What would the funds be used for?

Galston: Would be put towards maintenance, personnel to keep the facilities up and related expenses

Price: Looking at comparables, didn't have anything like this but familiar with similar sites (Palo Duro, for example), seems comparable to other areas with similar programs.

Galston: This is new to NM, innovative and neat program.

Price: Other comments about Aldo Leopold?

Castiglia: Was there a NEPA process or is fee adjustment outside NEPA.

Galston: Outside NEPA because it is market analysis and public involvement that determines fee

Price: Any other questions? None. Move ahead with acting on \$175/night

Discussions close

Voice vote:

In favor: unanimous

Opposed: none

Amole at \$100/night

Motion: Peggy McWilliams motion to approve

Second: Cameron Martinez

Discussion:

Castiglia: Acknowledge Charles Price efficacy. Question for Jeremy: how does this price compare to other similar sites?

Galston: Jemez has a site \$150/night. Pecos sites charge per person which is similar considering approx. 30 people.

Castiglia: Thank you

Price: Other questions?

Pugh: With proposed rate change, what is effective date?

Galston: Immediately upon approval from Forester. Must have been in Federal Register prior to implementation. These have been met.

Pugh: with COVID restrictions, any considerations for accommodating health issues?

Galston: Been learning a lot through COVID, trying to keep as much open as we can, even if a site is seasonal, a fee is not charged if all facilities are available.

Pugh: how many sites available to camp/RV? Is that comparable for an individual site?

Galston: Turn to Eric Garner

Garner: No sites immediately in the area. Consistent with other group shelters that have a fee, as well as adjacent agencies' sites.

Galston: How many people use the facility?

Garner: Small groups get to Amole group shelter. Not seen more than 50, does get use, know groups would love access and get to use on more normal basis.

McWilliam: Thinks this is outstanding, reasonable price and wonderful opportunity for children and public.

Price: Any other comments? None.

Voice vote to approve \$100/night

In favor: unanimous

Opposed: none

Adjourn for lunch at 12:24, return at 1:10pm

Jill: plan on a minimum of 75 days for agenda to be approved.

Price: confirms all present, opening for Public Comment. Noted q&a's in Zoom box.

Jill: Can go over questions in box then go to attendees.

Price: Yes, read questions from chat:

Public Question 1.

Gordon Glass 11:31 AM

× Dismiss

If time, I would like an update on budget adequacy for managing these hundreds of recreation facilities.

Clarification from Mr. Glass: question is for FUSS, maybe BLM too. Been curious, what percentage does the fee cover, in a general way, of those sites? What does the fee cover, versus what the general budget provides?

Price: Suggests Jeremy responds for USFS

Galston: Appreciate the question. 95% of revenue can be sent back to unit, but only to units that have rec sites. Example is campsites that have large water systems or infrastructures in place, sometimes fall short with budgets. Don't have exact allocations of budget allocations for recreation.

Culver: for BLM, an example in TFO, \$54K given to monument \$55k to FO. Santa Cruz Lake, doing reconstruction of site; costs \$650k, all coming from other than rec fee. Fees are \$5 or less. Many users have all encompassing type passes, so the fees don't cover

cleaning/toilets, snow plowing, seasonal employees. Fees probably cover (guesstimate) between 10-50% of general ops costs.

Price: Shortfall comes from where?

Culver: grants, special project funding, or reduce number of staff on board.

G. Glass: My concern, probably most costs are put into deferred maintenance, but obviously fees can only go so far, and we shouldn't expect them to go too far. If we're thinking about long term health of public lands and forests, we must consider current generations, not deferring to future. Should support and are obligated to take care of lands, fees are appropriate but should advocate for adequate funding.

Sherry Popham 01:22 PM

× Dismiss

Jill, Doug and I are on for public comment. He is going to take the lead. Can you confirm? We don't see anything to confirm. SNA re Manby Springs

Public Question 2.

Aragon: Yes, public comments go until 1:45. Use raise hand feature.

Sherry Popham: Speaking on behalf of neighborhood and home association Hondo Mesa, share a border with Monument. On 13th of this month, representatives met with BLM on concerns and heavy use of Manby Hot Springs, the resource is at risk, neighborhood is also negatively being affected due to proximity. PowerPoint is provided and asked to share with RAC members. Requesting topic is agenda so topic can be considered at next meeting.

Doug Daubert: President of Stagecoach Neighborhood Association (SNA), thanks Al, Judy, and Jill. Important that they met and hope to continue developing relationships.

Price: Will determine how to proceed with incorporating this.

Aragon: Can move forward on agenda items since no public questions or comments although must pause if public request to make a comment.

Price: since there are no other hands, suggest to move ahead with next agenda item. Other comments from RAC members?

Arrington: agree, also want to comment on G. Glass remarks, appreciate Mr. Glass's comments.

Price: agree, would like to understand BLM budgeting more. Perhaps future agenda item.

8. Rio Puerco Field Office

Mark Matthews, District Manager gave brief overview of Albuquerque District. Carolyn Russell: Acting FM for RPFO since October. Overview of RPFO. Adam Lujan and Elaine Lopez:

(see presentation)

Questions?

- a. Peter Castiglia: Describe issues from Placitas mineral development you mentioned?
 - Adam Lujan: it was a multitude of concerns, primarily related to air quality. Saw everything, increase in roads, viewshed, adverse impact to property values,
 - Castiglia: these are related to facility currently under operation?
 - Lujan: None currently, but these could be issues in the future.
- b. Price: Windfarm near Quemado, is that in Southern RAC?
 - Lopez: Correct, in Socorro FO.
- c. McWilliams: What is 2018 lease sale litigation regarding?
 - Lopez: Lease sale itself. Not a stay on the litigation so development can continue.

- McWilliams: Jicarilla is hoping O/G will extend into Jicarilla Nation.
- Castiglia: Is this Sandoval Co lease area?
- Lopez: Those are located in FFO, no current lease sale if RPFO
- d. Hersman: Due to Global warming, are you seeing decline in capacity of grazing/productivity, and if so are you adjusting permits and carrying capacity? Is BLM looking at that in general?
 - Lujan: Not necessarily seeing trends, currently in drought, work closely with operators to make voluntary reductions. Haven't had to do mandatory reductions.
- e. Hersman: Any interest in setting up research sites?
 - Lujan: We do have ongoing programs to check matrix. AIM program is biggest, looking at long term trend intervals of upland intervals. Look at that info and make recommendations for change. Do have a few projects with NMSU, not necessarily carrying capacity, but updating ESD and monitoring veg treatments and effectiveness.
- f. McWilliams: Are you seeing veg impacts from feral horses?
 - Lujan: Correct, feral horses are impacting range resources. Go further from water, up steeper slopes.
- g. Pugh: Referencing shooting and off-road driving. Looking for place to shoot in Albuquerque area on BLM...nothing comes up on BLM websites. Is anyone looking at updating websites to reflect info for the public?
 - Lujan: That is by design, vast majority of public lands are open to shooting. Do our best to avoid concentrating and attempt to disperse the effects.
 - Pugh: There isn't anything on NM website, refers to more widespread across west.
 - Elser: Good idea, July Culver in TFO may be able to address that in her presentation.
 - Pugh: Most people would like to go somewhere safe but getting info is hard, don't want to inadvertently go onto Pueblo lands.
 - Culver: Some other states are restricting shooting though NM doesn't have that restriction yet.
 - Elser: When you get those kinds of questions, please do refer them to our office. Our specialists can help them.
 - Pugh: Maybe website could say, call your local office for information.

9.Farmington District: Farmington FO

Dave M, Assistant FM FFO, filling in for Field Manager Rick Fields

(see slideshow)

Questions? No questions

10. Farmington District: Taos FO

Judy Culver, Taos Acting Field Manager

If presentation misses any info, please let her know.

(see slide show)

Questions? No

11. RAC discussion and future agenda items

O'Neill: have a short presentation regarding comments he made on FFO FMG RMPA (see presentation). Mick will submit presentation to RAC, as well as comments he made on RMPA.
(NOTE: presentation available to public by request)

Price: Note the amount of activity in the three offices. Would like to see the following items on future agendas: Charter indicates things RAC should address, would like guidance on incorporating that and Open Meeting rules, should address SNA, Manby Hot Springs and would like to understand BLM budget issues.

Price: What is the term for Chair?

Sandoval: One-year term.

Hersman: Imagine going to be more requests for fee sites, considering their backlog.

McWilliams: Going to need to address public behavior when accessing public lands/trespassing.

Castiglia: According to Charter, Al will ask for input on a lot of items. Can Al speak to what they should be raising as a RAC? That will help determine how to craft agenda.

Price: What are things that are handled routinely vs things that RAC advises on?

Elser: Encourage everyone to review the charter. That is the driving document and will help RAC understand role. It is wide open. RAC is an advisory committee, however BLM is still required to follow regulations. Allison, can you outline your experience with RAC's in the past?

Sandoval: RAC job to advise BLM. BLM sets agenda as to what topics RAC advises on but would like to collaborate with RAC. Charters are good for 2 years. This was signed in June of 2020, was based on Sec and Executive actions. RAC may want it to change.

Price: When would next meeting be and how/when do we need to set the agenda?

Sandoval: Generally quarterly meetings is the goal. Do have to publish in Federal Register 30 days in advance. Would be good to set a target date and perhaps Jill can send out a poll.

Price: Quarterly schedule would be good if possible, Jill can send a poll for an April meeting.

Aragon: Will send poll this week.

Martinez: Manby Hot Springs area would be a good agenda item, BLM budget, recreation budget would be good to hear about

Price: Can we put Manby Hot Springs on next agenda?

Elser: Yes, top priority.

Price: Would be a great field trip but might have to wait until COVID guidance changes. Possibly go individually.

Elser: Current public health orders allow gatherings of no more than five. The Field Office has been able to move forward by staging groups and mind social distancing recommendations, so that may be a possibility.

Culver: The BLM folks could meet out there.

Pugh: The Homeowners Association presentation will be submitted to RAC after this meeting. Is there a requirement or a way to ask the public for their proposed solution?

Elser: Manby Hot Springs is complex issue, has been a popular tourist destination. Main access has been through private lands, don't want to impact tourist destination but need to find solution to access problem.

Pugh: Also impact on image of BLM by citizens that use the area. Area by John Dunn bridge is a "hippie hangout" and used by a lot of people.

Elser: BLM will need to do what's right and what is required under the regulations, but that doesn't mean we can't think outside the box.

Culver: Black Rock Hot Springs is at John Dunn bridge and is a separate issue.

Pugh: Manby is nearby.

Elser: We could discuss the whole area if that would be helpful.

Pugh: Could look at Google maps, etc. and see access issues.

Aragon: Clarifying that if there are small group field trips those would have to be advertised and public invited.

Price: Jill, Al, would you be developing a draft agenda?

Aragon: Yes, an agenda will be sent to chair for consideration.

Price: What else?

Sertich: Pike National Feasibility Work. Is that in conjunction with Rio Grande trail?

Culver: Different; BLM NMSO is involved.

Sertich: Statewide comprehensive recreation plan?

Culver: Have been involved in the past. Just now launching SCORP for NM. Announcement was just sent. BLM will be involved; likely at NMSO with convos with FO when necessary.

O'Neill: Announcement in newspaper today.

Culver: Each agency will identify a POC.

Castiglia: Request for agenda item, we heard great info from field offices but didn't hear a "number one" issue for RAC input. Would be helpful to have that info from FO's to help prioritize where to focus.

Elser: Considering an incoming new administration and possible changes to our priorities.

O'Neill: How long has it taken in the past during transitions?

Elser: Not sure what to expect, typically the first month or so there are a lot of briefings, continues while new people get confirmed. However, this past administration was a different approach, were given new priorities very quickly.

O'Neill: Will look to Jill to keep RAC posted.

Sandoval: Previous role was Nationwide RAC coordinator. With every transition there has been a pause with RACs. Generally, takes some time for new administration to understand what RACs are and who the members are. Be prepared for possible pauses, April meeting may be pushed a little further out.

Price: Is eager to keep RAC going.

Arrington: Would like to see a better process during our meetings to hear and see public comment.

Price: Saw Mr. Glass's comment about having two comment periods. How has the public been handled in the past?

Aragon: Keep in mind the RAC is obligated to be present during any public comment period. Al and Allison, can you weigh in on having 2 public comment periods?

Price: We'll consider it while developing next meeting agenda.

Price: Think we're ready to adjourn. Thank you for the Chair nomination.

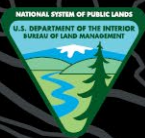
O'Neill: Very excited to see level of enthusiasm with this RAC.

Price: Motion to adjourn?

Martinez: Motion to adjourn.

Second? O'Neill

Unanimous vote to adjourn, meeting adjourned at 3:55pm

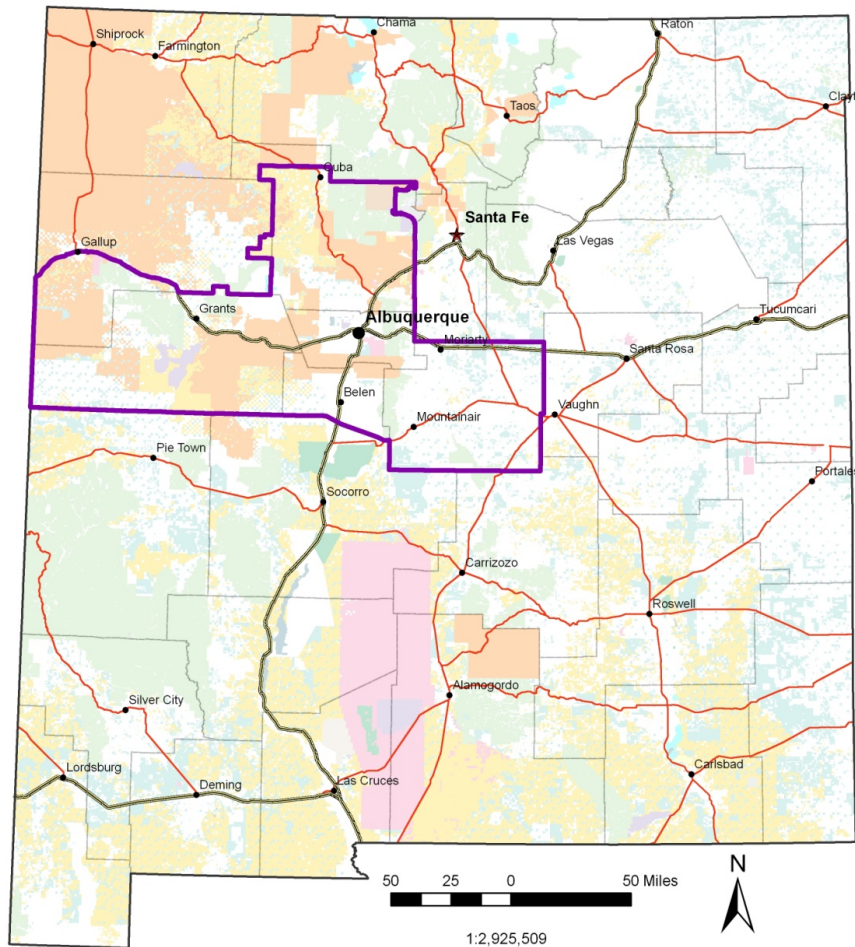


U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

Rio Puerco Field Office

Albuquerque District, New Mexico

Northern NM Resource Advisory Council Briefing, January 2021



BLM Surface

986,202 acres

Federal Mineral 3.6 million

Land Use Plans

Rio Puerco LUP 1992

El Malpais LUP 2001

KKTR LUP 2003

Counties

Sandoval

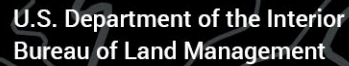
Cibola

Mckinley

Bernalillo

Torrance

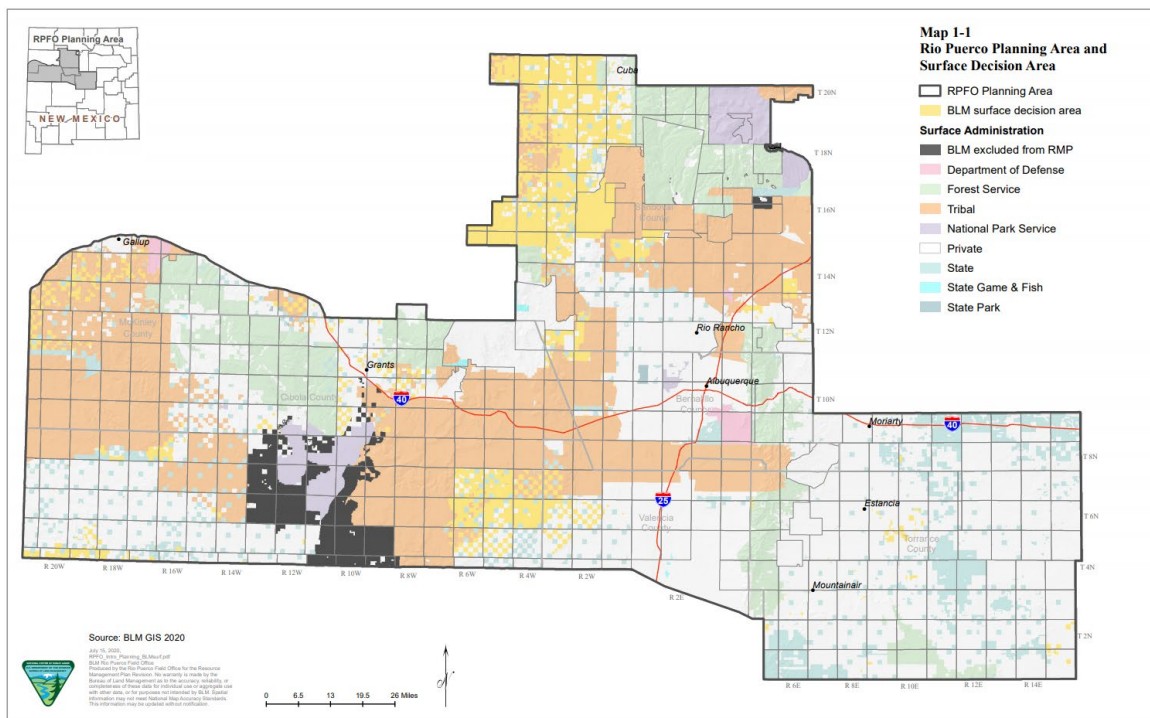
Valencia

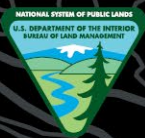


BLM Surface
731,600 acres

- Grazing
- Firewood Cutting
- Solid Mineral
- Fluid Mineral
- ROW's
- Recreation

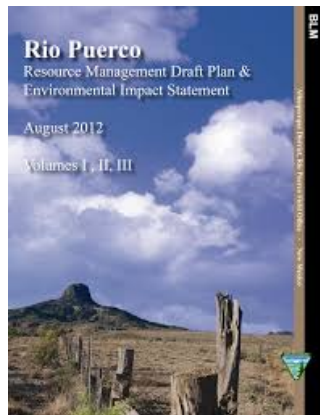
- Placitas mineral development
- Feral Horses
- Erosion
- Resource damage from firewood cutting
- Lack of developed recreation





U.S. Department of the Interior
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Rio Puerco Land Use Plan



Priorities

1. Complete RMP
2. Keep feral livestock out
3. Repair dams and headcuts
4. Concentrate wood cutting and achieve resource goals
5. Develop trails and sites for recreational opportunities



Partners

1. Cooperating Agencies and Public
2. NMLB, Grazing Operators, Tribes
3. NMACD, Operations Crew
4. Tribes and public
5. Public



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Public Interest

Resource Uses by workload

Grazing

ROW's

Solid Mineral

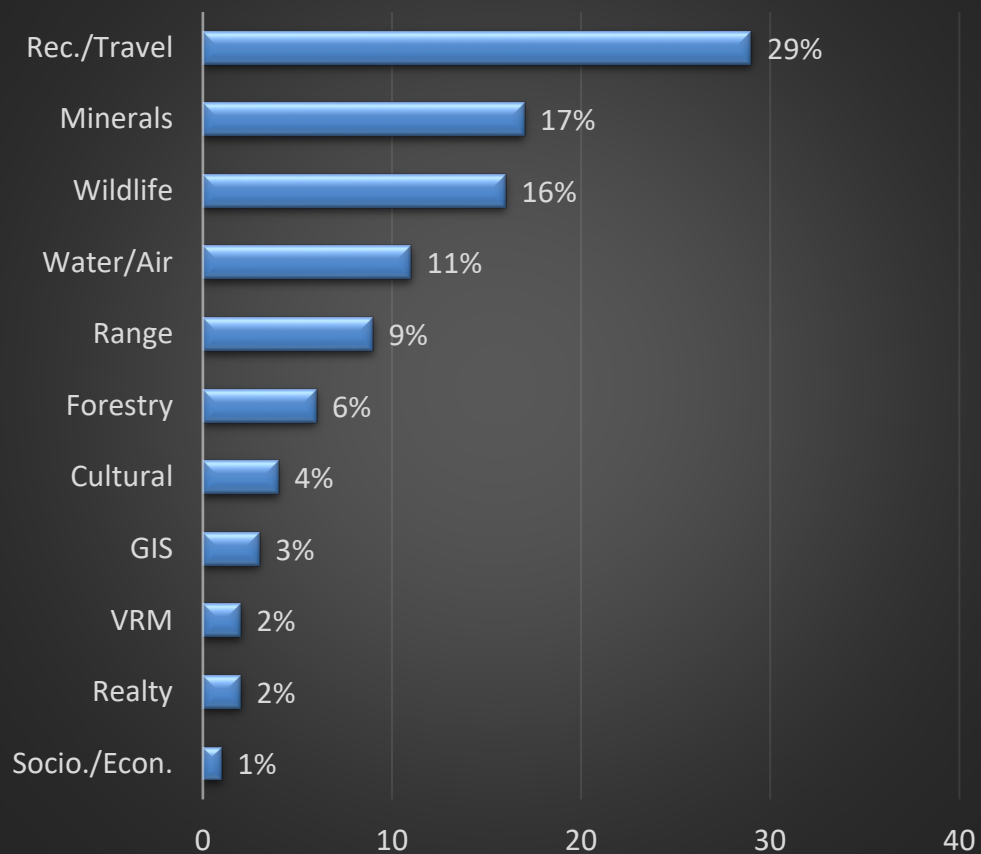
Fluid Mineral

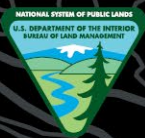
Recreation

45,000 comments on Draft EIS

- General public
 - Placitas Community
- Environmental NGOs
 - Wilderness Society
 - Sierra Club
- Tribal Governments
- Industry

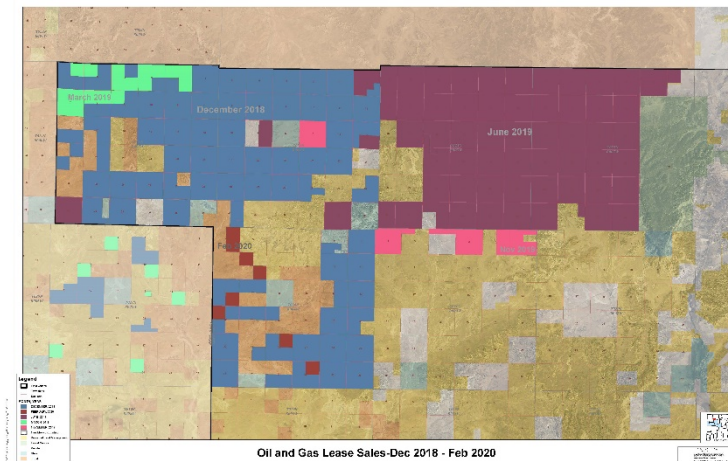
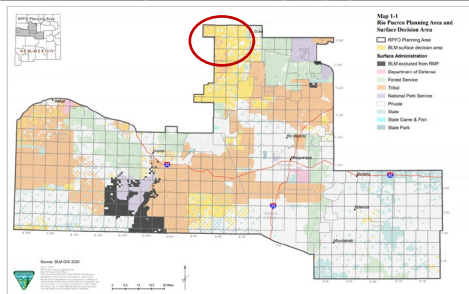
Breakdown of public comment by topic





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Fluid Minerals



Oil and Gas Lease Sales-Dec 2018 - Feb 2020

Lease Sales

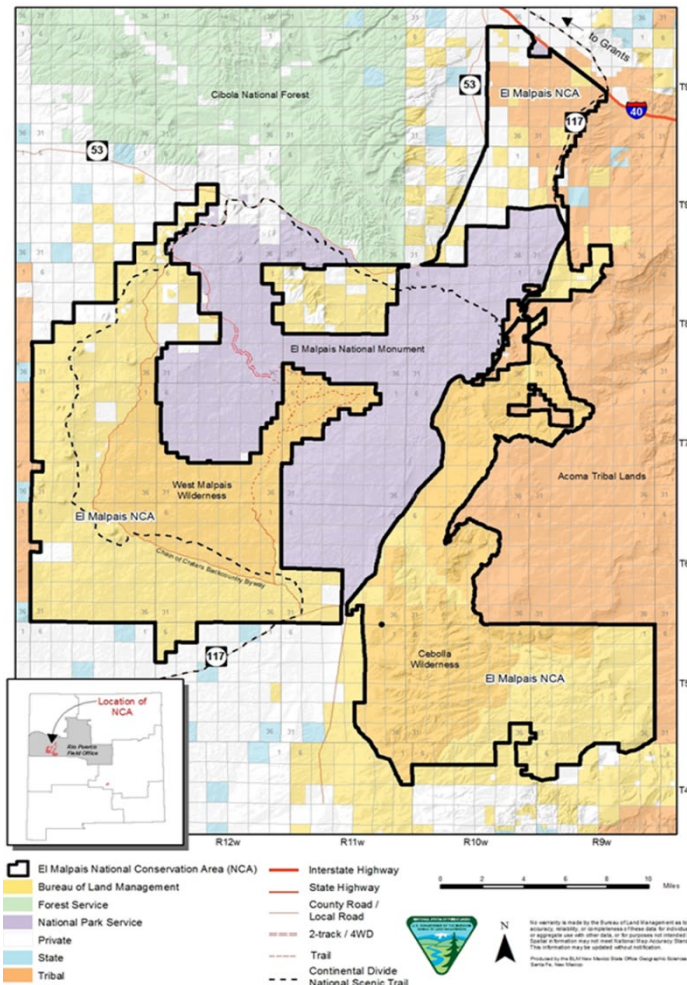
- December 2018 - 41,000 acres
- March 2019 – 3,003 acres (lease issuance pending)
- June 2019 – 37,230 acres (lease issuance pending)
- November 2019 -2,838 acres
- February 2020 – 1,250 acres





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El Malpais National Conservation Area



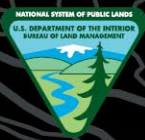
BLM Surface
249,200 acres

Primary uses

- Grazing
- Dispersed Recreation

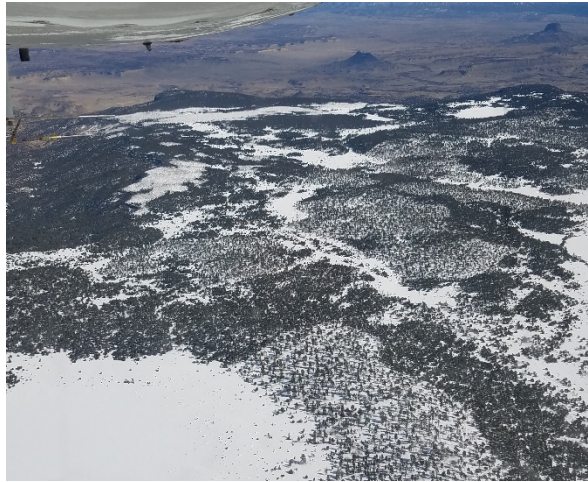
Issues

- High fuel loading
- Off-road driving
- User-created sites



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El Malpais National Conservation Area



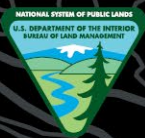
Priorities

1. Vegetative Treatments (Restore NM)
2. Coordinate and strategize patrols
3. Education Outreach of the Area

Partners

1. NMDGF, NMACD, NPS, grazing operators
2. NMDGF, BLM LEO's and park rangers
3. BLM, Public





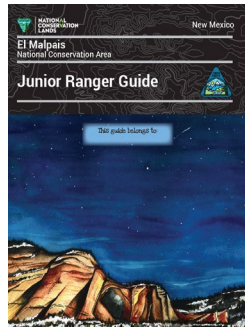
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El Malpais National Conservation Area



Recreation Accomplishments

1. Ranger Station Rec Site Improvements
2. Partnership with NPS to apply for Night Sky Park Status
3. Junior Ranger Booklet
4. La Ventana Rec Site Improvements



Future Priorities

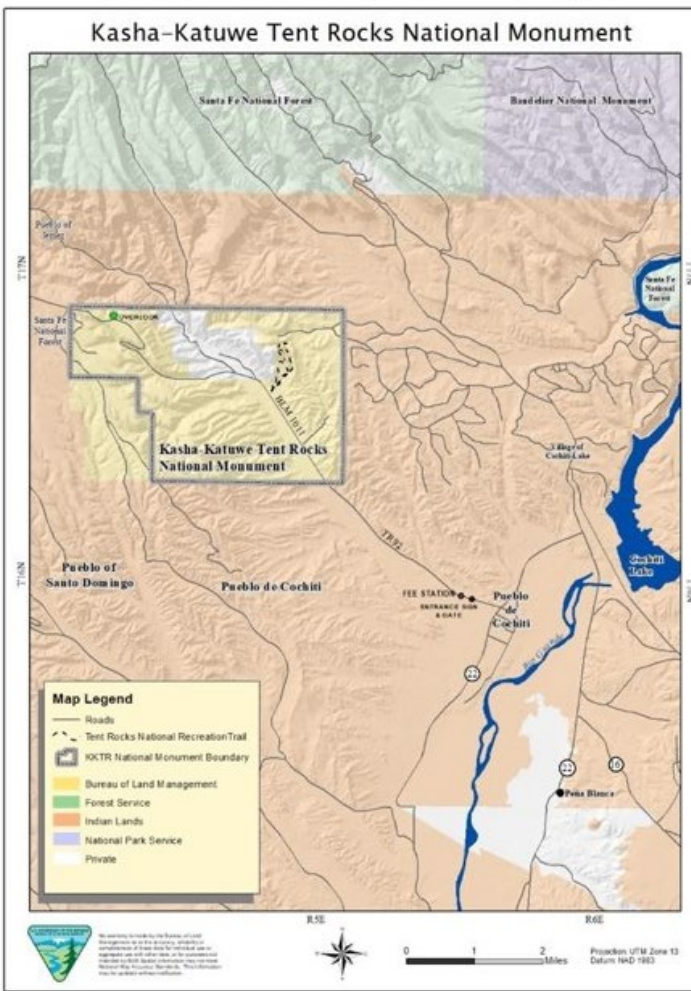
1. Hire Additional Staff
2. Complete Application for Night Sky Status
3. Additional Site Improvements
4. Business Plan for Fee Sites





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Kasha Katuwe Tent Rocks National Monument



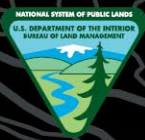
BLM Surface
5,402 acres

Primary use

- Recreation

Issues

- Access
- Overcrowding
- Lack of trails
- Resource Damage



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Kasha Katuwe Tents Rocks National Monument

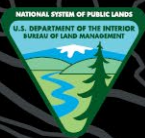


Priorities

1. Gain long term legal access
2. Reduce visitors through online permitting system
3. Develop new trails and opportunities
4. Improve trail
5. Business Plan for Fee Increase

Partners

1. Cochiti Pueblo, public, BIA, USFS
2. Rec.gov, Cochiti Pueblo
3. Cochiti Pueblo and public
4. Youth groups
5. BLM, Pueblo



Takeaways

The Rio Puerco Field Office is in the population center of New Mexico so there is active interest by many groups because of proximity.

Interest in the following resources will continue to rise in central New Mexico:

- Recreation – hiking/camping
- Recreation – shooting
- Special Designations – more areas for solitude

Because of this, user conflicts will continue to rise between the above interests and the following activities :

- Grazing
- Mineral Development
- Firewood Cutting
- ROW's



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BLM Resource Advisory Councils 101

BLM Northern New Mexico Resource Advisory Council

January 19, 2021





Objectives:

- Role of the RAC
- Legal framework
- FACA and CFR overview
- Nomination process
- RAC Charter





Role of the BLM RAC

According to FLPMA:

An advisory council may furnish advice to the Secretary with respect to the land use planning, classification, retention, management, and disposal of the public lands within the area for which the advisory council is established and such other matters as may be referred to it by the Secretary.



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Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA)





FACA ensures that all Federal advisory committees:

- Provide advice that is relevant, objective, and open to the public;
- Act promptly to complete their work; and
- Comply with reasonable cost controls and recordkeeping requirements.



43 CFR 1784 states:

●Further defines the purpose of the RAC	●Two-year terms
●Requires all BLM-administered lands have a RAC	●Requires appointment of an elected official, and criteria for if they leave office
●Three models	●Reappointment rules
●Procedures for forwarding recommendations and quorums	●Meeting notices
●Governor consultation	●Termination of membership
●Ethics	●Nomination process
●Concurrent RAC service	●Call for nominations
●State residency requirements	●Election of officers
●Member instructions	●Categories
●Subcommittee meetings	



BLM RAC Categories & Interest

Northern New Mexico Resource Advisory Council Members

Bureau	Committee Name	Membership Criteria	Term Length	Member	Interest Represented <small>*Key located at the bottom</small>	Term Begin	Term End
BLM	Northern New Mexico Resource Advisory Council	This Resource Advisory Council is composed of 12 members, representing three categories - commodity, non-commodity, and local area interest. Each category has at least three members.	3 years	1. Castiglia, Peter 2. McWilliams, Peggy 3. Pugh, Wilfred 4. VACANT 5. Boretsky, John 6. Hersman, Larry E. 7. O'Neill, Michael 8. Sertich, Richard 9. Arrington, John B. 10. Duran, Frank 11. Martinez, Cameron 12. Price, Charles	Energy/Minerals Energy/Minerals Outdoor Recreation MEMBER – Category 1 Dispersed Recreation Dispersed Recreation Dispersed Recreation Dispersed Recreation Elected Official Academician Native American Tribe Public-at-Large	9/2/2020 5/23/2019 5/15/2019 9/21/2018 8/21/2018 12/4/2015 5/15/2019 8/21/2018 5/15/2019 5/23/2019 5/15/2019	9/2/2023 5/23/2022 5/15/2022 9/21/2021 8/21/2021 5/23/2022 5/15/2022 8/21/2021 5/15/2022 5/23/2022 5/15/2022

Category One: Federal grazing permittees; transportation or rights-of-way interests; developed outdoor recreation, off-highway vehicle users, or commercial recreation activities; the commercial timber industry; or energy and mineral development interests;

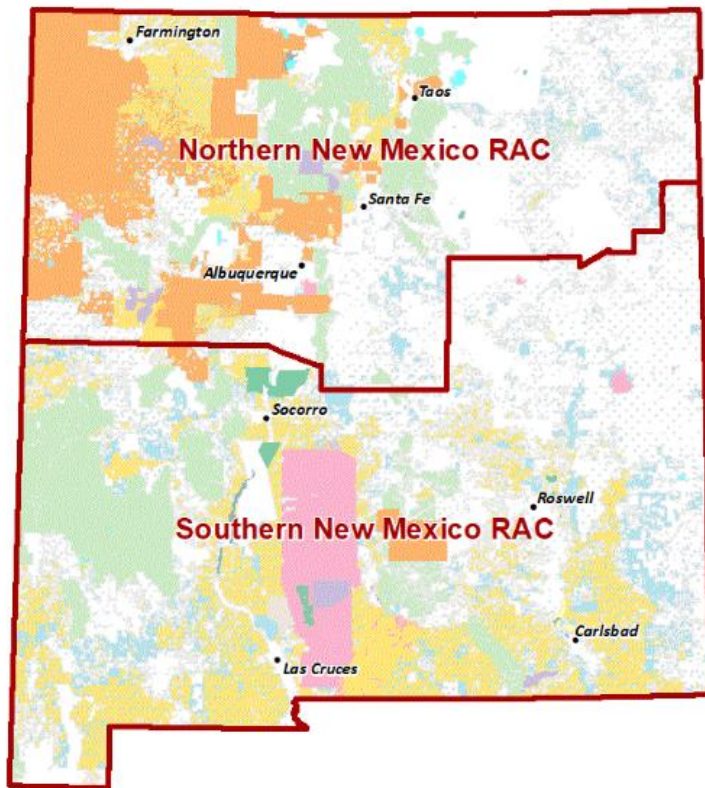
Category Two: Environmental organizations; dispersed recreational activities; archaeological and historical interests; or wild horse and burro interests; and

Category Three: State, county, or local elected officials; state agencies responsible for management of natural resources, land, or water; local Indian Tribes; academicians in natural resources management or natural sciences; or the affected public-at-large.



Charters

New Mexico Bureau of Land Management Resource Advisory Council Boundaries



No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual use or separate use with other data, or for purposes not intended by BLM.



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

NORTHERN NEW MEXICO RESOURCE ADVISORY COUNCIL

CHARTER

- 1. OFFICIAL DESIGNATION:** Northern New Mexico Resource Advisory Council (Council).
- 2. AUTHORITY:** The Council is a statutory advisory committee established under section 309 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA), as amended (43 U.S.C. 1739). The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is subject to standards and procedures for the creation, operation, and termination of BLM resource advisory councils. Refer to the 1995 amended BLM regulations (43 CFR 1784) for specific regulations regarding composition (1784.6-1(c)); avoidance of conflicts of interest (1784.2-2); calls for nominations (1784.4-1); notice of meetings (1784.4-2); open meetings (1784.4-3); records (1784.5-3); course of instruction for members (1784.6-1(f)); and quorum requirements (1784.6-1(h)). The Council is regulated by the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), as amended (5 U.S.C. Appendix 2). Pursuant to section 804(d)(1)(D) of the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (REA)(16 U.S.C. 6803(d)(1)(D)), the Council is authorized to make recommendations on the BLM and U.S. Forest Service (FS) recreation fee proposals.
- 3. OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF ACTIVITIES:** The Council will serve in an advisory capacity concerning the planning and management of the public land resources located within the BLM's Rio Puerco Field Office and Farmington District.
- 4. DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES:** Council duties and responsibilities, where applicable, are as follows:
 1. Upon the request of the Designated Federal Officer (DFO), develop recommendations for the BLM with respect to the land use planning, classification, retention, management, and disposal of the public lands within the area for which the advisory council is established and such other matters as may be referred to it by the DFO.
 2. Upon the request of the DFO, the Council may make recommendations regarding a standard amenity recreation fee or an expanded amenity recreation fee, whenever the recommendations related to public concerns in the State or region covered by the Council regarding:
 - (a) the implementation of a standard amenity recreation fee or an expanded amenity recreation fee or the establishment of a specific recreation fee site;
 - (b) the elimination of a standard amenity recreation fee or an expanded amenity recreation fee; or



Appointing Committee Members

Public notifications for advisory committee nominations:

- Federal Register Notices
- Press releases
- Social media
- Interested parties lists



Nomination Process

- Open Call for Nominations in *Federal Register*/Press Release Announcement
- State/Governor Review
- BLM Washington Office Review
- Departmental Review
- White House Review



Contact Information

BLM Northern NM RAC DFO:

Al Elser (Farmington District Manager)

aelser@blm.gov

505-564-7618

Acting Albuquerque District Manager:

Mark Matthews

mmatthew@blm.gov

575-838-1250

BLM Northern NM RAC Coordinator:

Jillian Aragon

jgaragon@blm.gov

505-564-7722

Visit the BLM Northern NM RAC website:

<https://www.blm.gov/get-involved/resource-advisory-council/near-you/new-mexico/northern-rac>



U.S. Department of the Interior
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United States Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management

Farmington Field Office





FFO Overview

- 1.4 million BLM managed surface acres
- 2.7 million acres Federal minerals
- Staff: Approximately 80 staff members, with three primary divisions: Minerals, Lands & Renewable Resources, and Support Services
- Continuing to build and maintain relationships with Tribes, local governments, special interest groups, and the public.



Regulations and Guidance

- Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA), Clean Water Act, Clean Air Act, National Historic Preservation Act, National Environmental Policy Act (not a comprehensive list)
- Resource Management Plan

CEQ's NEPA regulations updated, effective Sept. 14, 2020

- Goal is to simplify and clarify requirements, key elements of final rule:

Approximately 20 Secretarial Orders directing DOI, for example:

Secretarial Order 3355

- Streamlines NEPA to include time and page limits for NEPA documents
- This S.O. is now codified in the new CEQ regulations

Secretarial Order 3362

- Directs the improvement of wildlife habitat quality in western big game winter range and migration corridors

Secretarial Order 3380

- Requires public notice of the costs associated with developing Department of the Interior Publications and Similar Documents



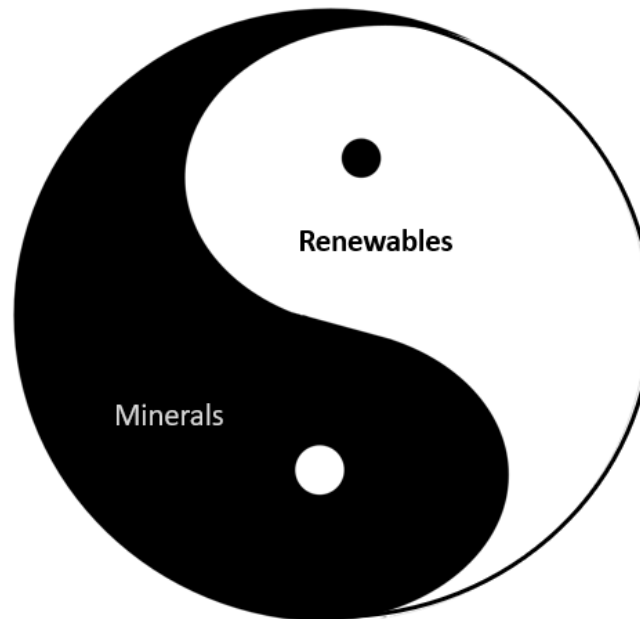
Managing Mineral Resources

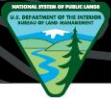
Fluid Minerals (oil, natural gas, helium, etc)

- 23,000 active oil and gas wells
- Large Inspection and Enforcement staff

Solid Minerals (coal, sand, gravel, humate, etc)

- Two active coal mines (one surface(Navajo), one underground(San Juan))
- Mineral Materials (Sand and Gravel, Humate, Pumice, etc.)





Oil and Gas Lease Sales

FFO Lease Sales From March 2018 Forward:

- December 2018 Competitive Oil and Gas Lease Sale
- March 2019 Competitive Oil and Gas Lease Sale
- June 2019 Competitive Oil and Gas Lease Sale
- February 2020 Competitive Oil and Gas Lease Sale
- May 2020 Competitive Oil and Gas Lease Sale
- July 2021 Competitive Oil and Gas Lease Sale



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Managing for Multiple Resources





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Farmington Field Office Recreation





Wilderness Areas



Ah-Shi-Sle-Pah
Wilderness



Bisti/De-Na-Zin
Wilderness



Energy and right-of-way development





Major ROW Project: Shiprock Solar

- Nationwide BLM Solar Energy Program supports U.S. renewable energy goals and objectives.
- Currently one active solar project in the FFO, Shiprock Solar, and growing interest in the area. Three additional ROW projects for transmission lines to connect utility-scale solar projects on private lands.
- Shiprock Solar proposal for a utility scale photovoltaic solar power plant with a planned generating capacity of up to 372 megawatts (MW), located immediately west of the San Juan Generating Station (currently coal-based power plant), between Farmington and Shiprock
- Next step is to begin developing a NEPA document.



Farmington Mancos-Gallup Resource Management Plan Amendment and Environmental Impact Statement

- A major planning effort for FFO – proposed amendments for the FFO's 2003 RMP
- Initiated in 2012 after an increase in unconventional oil/gas development in the San Juan Basin
- Planning issues include: oil and gas, lands and realty, BLM-managed lands with wilderness characteristics, and vegetation management.
- BIA joined as co-lead in 2016
- Extensive public scoping helped develop five alternatives



RMPA: Project Recap, continued

Summary of BLM and BIA Alternatives

Alternative	BLM	BIA
No Action	Continue 2003 RMP management direction	Continue current management of leasing practices
A	Manage and enhance habitats with measures designed to support natural ecosystems	Protect and enhance natural ecology, with protection of sensitive wildlife areas and natural resources
B	Preserve Chacoan and cultural landscapes; prioritize preservation of cultural and paleontological properties, including specific measures proposed by stakeholders	Preserve and protect the cultural and natural landscapes unique to northern New Mexico
C	Balances community needs and development while enhancing land health	Allow development to occur in harmony with the traditional, historic, socioeconomic, and cultural lifeways of planning area
D	Maximize resources that target economic outcomes while sustaining land health	Maximize resource production and royalty income for Navajo Nation and tribal allottees and minimize and mitigate impacts to surrounding communities



RMPA: Project Recap, continued

- 210-day public comment period on Draft EIS from Feb-Sept 2020 included five Virtual Public Meetings, one live call-in radio show, and four Virtual Open Houses, along with a companion website during the public comment period.
- The comment period closed on Sept. 25, 2020; over 85,000 comments were received.
- Currently being revised to incorporate substantive comments.

Next steps:

- Public release proposed RMP and final EIS
- 30-day protest period
- 60-day NM governor's consistency review (BLM)
- 60-day Navajo Nation President review (BIA)
- On schedule to sign a ROD in June 2021



Questions?

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Taos Field Office





Introduction

The Taos Field Office occupies nine counties and manages over 603,542 surface acres and includes:

- 1,517,850 mineral acres (mineral estate is managed through the Farmington District)
- 10 Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs)
- Rio Grande del Norte National Monument
- 42 miles of National Historic Trails
- 104 miles Wild and Scenic Rivers
- Three Wilderness Areas
- Rio Chama Wilderness Study Area
- Five State or National Scenic Byways
- 3rd largest (and growing) urban interface/WUI in the nation





Current Planning Efforts

The Taos Field Office occupies nine counties and manages over 603,542 surface acres and includes:

- Cones Vegetation Treatment Project Environmental Assessment
- Rael Ranch Management Plan
- NNSA 115Kv transmission line Buckman-Santa Fe County
- Horsethief Mesa Travel Management Plan EA
- Sombrillo Travel Management Plan EA
- San Juan Chama Return Flow Pipeline-Buckman Direct Diversion Pipeline Corridor



Lands/Realty Projects

UTILITIES ROWs AND EASEMENTS

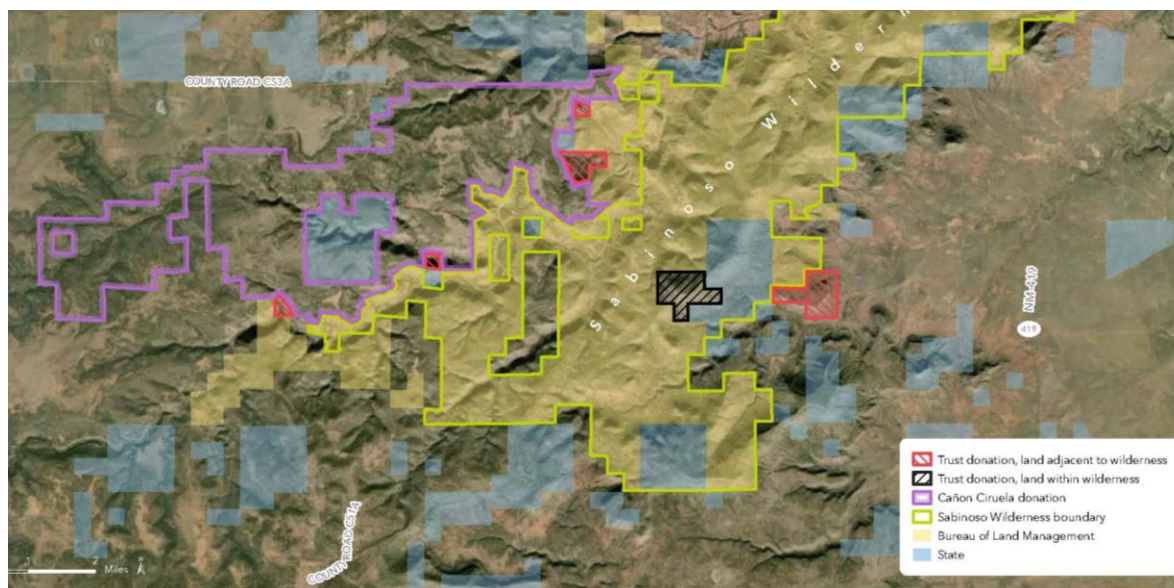
- NNSA 115Kv transmission line Buckman-Santa Fe County-***Los Alamos National Laboratory Proposed Electrical Power Capacity Upgrade Project***
- City of Santa Fe or in conjunction with City of Santa Fe
 - Solar projects
 - San Juan Chama Return Flow Pipeline-Buckman Direct Diversion Pipeline Corridor
 - Madera Apartments, LLC project 3 ROWs in combination with Santa Fe patent or lease for open space park
- Rio Chiquito - Tank Site Easements-Rio Chiquito Mutual Domestic Water Consumers Association ROW for one of the current tanks, pipeline and road and additional tank and associated water line to a proposed tank expansion project



Lands/Realty Projects

LANDS

- Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo Land Exchange
- Sabinoso Wilderness donation of Hobo Ranch
- Town of Edgewood R&PP Lease -update NMNM109919-01
- NMDOT Rio Grande Gorge High Bridge perfect ROW, site design, ADA and trail access, management requirements
- Horcado Ranch Road ROW dispute-SNIC





Pressing Issues

- Federal Highways construction projects-C110, Wild Rivers Byway & John Dunn Bridge projects will cause impacts recreation access. BLM will attempt to mitigate impacts.
- John Dunn Bride: active slide zone on B-007 switchback; Taos County reviewing options
- Pike National Historic Trail Feasibility Study led by National Park Service
- La Junta Trail Rehabilitation Feasibility Study, management will make decision on costs, public safety and probability of long-term stability





Pressing Issues-Public Access

- Lack of legal public access to BLM and Rio Grande del Norte NM
 - Manby Hotsprings-no legal public access on Tune Drive, through easement or adjacent property; damage being done by public users.
 - Rio Grande Embudo river access through private lands was not perfected and has been lost due to increased traffic and abuse of BLM and adjoining private lands.
 - San Antonio Mountain Communication Site (FBI, USFS, BLM and others)-lost access through private property; area also used for local hunting and wood harvesting.
 - Rio Grande National Trail Commission meetings have begun again but no easements or ROWs across tribal, private or State Trust Lands at this time to connect proposed trail segments.



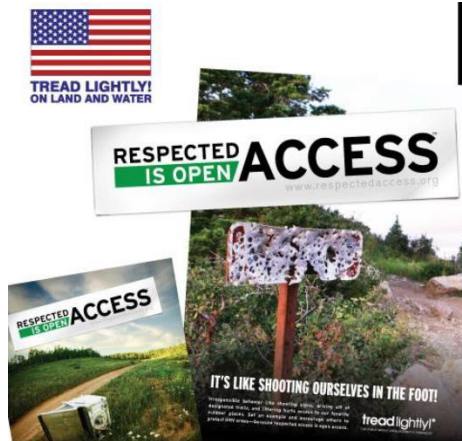
Progressive Partnerships

- Horsethief Mesa Travel Management Plan EA
 - Enchanted Circle and Taos Mountain Biking Association
 - GPS'd potential routes, identified routes that were missed in 2012
- Crossroads CFRP EA- the 2nd NMSLO/USFS CFRP that allows the BLM to treat lands to reduce the threat of catastrophic wildfires.
- Sombrillo TMP EA
 - Working with neighborhoods, Santa Fe Fat Tire Association
 - Exploring options with Santa Clara Pueblo to collaborate on the process and implementation of the TMP.



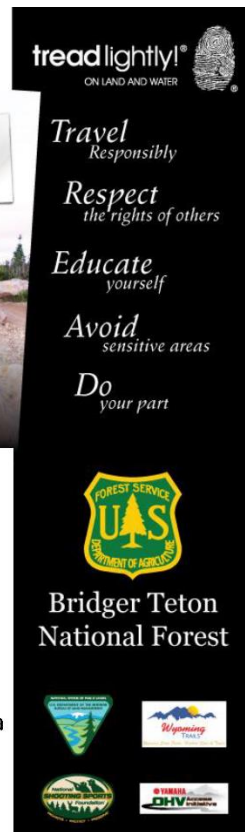
Progressive Partnerships

- Taos Field Office Recreational Shooting EA
 - Recreation shooting forum including, city, county, USFS, FWS
 - Developing communications strategy and alternatives.



Please NO SHOOTING IN THIS AREA

Lower Mosquito Creek road passes through private land . Preserve future access by respecting the residential area in this area. Safer target shooting opportunities are available further up Mosquito Creek – gate opens June 1.





Questions?

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