

NW RAC
Meeting Minutes

8:08 – Introductions

Public – Alicia

Lonny

Brian – Congressman Tipton

David Boyd

Dean – Move onto schedule

Joyner – House keeping

Dean – in the past we've had a chairman and vice chair. Typically we've flopped these two. We don't have to do it that way and we can entertain any ideas on this. I've been chair a while and think a change would be good. I would entertain any discussion on this. It's a little bit different because we've not faced new applying members this late. Discussion on how you'd like to proceed.

Jim – You've done a remarkable job

Dean – Thank you, I'm just trying to keep on task

Wes- I'd like to see you continue

Luke- So that means Barb

Barb-How would that work?

Boyd- It has happened before but it isn't a problem

Luke-seems like Dean would be back in the job if Barb isn't reelected

Dean-People who've been doing this for a while typically are the people that are te people who do it Barb

Dean – vote motion carries – Barb will be the chairperson

Dean – what would be the best thing to do with vice-chair?

Luke- I nominate Dean

Barb – suggest there be time before we make this decision

Kent – Seems we need to establish someone

George – I would encourage someone to step up and be vice chair

Wes – I don't have the technology skills

John- I'm probably the senior

John – I nominate John potter

Motion seconded

Motion carries

John Potter will be the vice chair

George – I have some conflicts

Katie – Send out dates with narrowed scope

8:30 –

Dean - I want to apologize for not being at the previous days. I had some required meetings. I'd like to give the opportunity for us to discuss items from the last couple days.

Luke – thanks for having a statewide meeting. The overarching topics were great. The RAC discussion went a little bit labored. It was difficult having the far ranging discussions. Other than that, it was an excellent time and education experience

Mike- topics were great but the duration was a bit much with two hours of open discussion

Joe – We're already discussing how to deliver RAC 101 in a better more streamlined manner.

Mike – I felt I already had the information I needed. I'm still trying to get to know people.

Joe – I think the idea of more homework. It feels more and more like we're presenting information than getting advice. I think if we can preload these things we can have a chance to see things before meetings.

Barb – I agree that having things pre-loaded would help us ask good questions

Connor – The use of technology sharing was very important – we may want to look at a dropbox repository for information that might be of interest. It could be a great way of doing homework. Google earth files to help understand.

Barb-Some of us will use this

Steph – for any of you that want to come up to Kremmling

Katie – Presentation management should include a section of questions at the beginning of the presentation that will prompt the answers we need

Dean – I agree with this. We don't want informational meetings.

Joe – we've been open to anything

George – It would be nice to see some of these items ahead of meetings.

Kent – I like getting hard copies ahead of time. If we post it somewhere would that meet the intent.

George – I suggest things more than a week out from meetings

Joe – I do like the idea of a packet.

Dean – It will not be a perfect deal but I do like the idea of getting things in advance

Joe – I think we can make that happen.

Dean – that would also help if we need to do some written advice to you.

Carl – I appreciated the planning 2.0 conversation I think it will be interesting to see how the field offices will use this information. I think we should encourage the field office to do this kind of planning.

Luke- I'd like to know some ideas from field offices how they want to get updates

John-We have into May 24 to get in comments so there may or may not be changes

Barb- I overheard they're was an oversight committee in DC that plan to talk to Neil Kornzie about this, so not sure on the future.

Kent – I take for granite the participation we get with the NW RAC. We've phoned in people in the past. I think the readiness level of this RAC is greater. I think the clear goals have been helpful

Wes – I'm very proud of the progress we have

Luke – The sub group question about format

Kent – it is part of the subgroup charter. We formalized in a written document.

Barb – We need to get this to new RAC meetings. The RAC member serve as only a liaisons to the sub RAC. The only way for the subRAC to give a recommendation to the RAC is through the liaisons.

Katie – please clarify

Kent – Discussion about subRAC failure in the past. The mission is making recommendation and reporting the parts where we could not reach consensus.

Luke-Question about adding a component addendum to RAC Charter that covers the same charter for the subRAC as it applies to the RAC.

Dean – My experience was that the subRAC didn't get a lot of great guidance and parameters early on. It almost became a standing committee of BLM employees. It became clear that you have to define the need and expectations clearly in the beginning of when it is formed.

Kent – Presentation on subRAC – See presentation

You're going to have a meeting in Aug. We'll have a recommendation after that Aug meeting and we'll get you our recommendation via technology

Barb – question about whether the public needs to be able to see the recommendation and what we as the RAC do with the recommendation.

Travel management boundary includes the entire field office.

Two planning phases – Land use plan amendment

We're developing alternatives for roads and trails to look at throughout the entire field office.

The reason we broken it out like this because we thought it would be better to have smaller geographic regions when we do route-by-route planning

We think it will take a year or so to do each zone.

We want to have consistency so one of the things we've done is we began our inventory of routes in 2014. We looked at a three prong approach – see slide with bubbles

In 2017, we'll start our first route-by-route plan.

Programmatic Agreement – We consulted tribal leaders to set up 106 responsibilities during this designation planning process

We want this settled before we go forward. The programmatic agreement will help us identify how we will mitigate cultural impacts on routes.

Public involvement

At this point, we're just asking the public to help us identify routes that are important to people

Mike – I know your staff has been super thorough but I'm curious about the public

Kent – we're getting feedback

Barb-probably because we're not saying if something is open or closed.

Kent – we are looking at some open areas and those areas will be inventoried completely.

Kent – we will show you the alternatives at the Aug meeting

Katie – you're not going to have maps?

Kent – No because these are areas. It will have the details regarding designation criteria for that area.

They'll be area maps but will consist more of designation criteria

George – If we do this electronically, it may limit discussion. It will be individual and not discussion based

Kent – John Potter is the RAC liaison.

George – so we'll have a lot of this information at the Aug meeting.

Kent – we want the final alternatives by middle of October and start impact analysis

Barb – I can understand the desire to have some discussion. What does the RAC think about organizing a free conference call, web ex, 1800 number,

Kent-our intent in August is to educate the RAC

John – Why does this seem so fast

Katie – they're not doing route-by-route planning just yet.

Barb- talking about the cultural resource bit. Looking at the resource use intensity. How flexible will the RMP be?

Kent – We've discussed this with our consulting parties for our programmatic discussions. We're adaptable

Carl- This is a good process. You're creating a movable plan. One day, I saw Katie being attacked. If we keep this moving in the direction you've discussed, you'll either get them out of the woods earlier or they'll realized they can be involved.

Luke – this frontloads the public's involvement. This helps the public get involved

10:00 a.m.

Hunter Seim (Acting Field Manager) – Presentation on Sand Wash – See .ppt
Geographic characteristics of Sand Wash HMA

Right now, not including this year's foal crop, we're probably just shy 600 horses.
360 is our upper management level

We were on a 5-6 gather cycle. Last gather was 2008. Since 2008, the national pipeline became full and adoptions slowed. Now, more attention on Sand Wash with Social Media. This has caused us a lot of challenges.

We're working with our partners for PZP injections (Contraceptive)

What we are looking to do this fall is conduct bait and water traps with help of SWAT. We will gather 1-2 year aged horses. We'll look to adopt locally and then horses will be transported through to Canyon City.

Still need some public scoping and other regulatory process meetings.

Luke – Has there been any litigation?

Hunter – No, but it has been threatened. RMP and Sage Grouse plans require we operate within AML. Current sheep rancher is now avoiding the area for grazing. We're getting a lot of animals relying on the winter range. We have prioritized Sand Wash for potential gathers in 2017 and 2018. For PZP to work, we must get back to AML.

Barb – Did I understand that you found some Leks in the HMA?

Hunter – With the help of CPW, we found active Leks in the Herd Management Area. With the severe weather conditions, we think we'll see a lot of mortality.

Wes- can you elaborate on bait trapping

Hunter – use water or hay. The forage conditions will dictate if we use water or hay.

Connor – if you're successful in treatment, how long before you see population impacts?

Hunter – there is a ton of PZP information online. We do have a new wild horse specialist in the district. He will be engaged.

Hunter – they're actually horses that will drift down from Wyoming into the field office.

Barb – removing 50 horses is just a drop in the bucket

Hunter – yes, but its an opportunity to place some horses and help us get closer to AML

Joe – Do we still have continued support from the RAC for supporting the BLM on gather horses and get them to AML.

Dean – yes

Barb – Can we have previous WHB resolutions from the RAC sent out to RAC members?

Chris – yes, will send out resolutions

Dean- The friends group for the Little Book Cliffs seems to be an excellent friends group to help horses and the range. The BLM should try to replicate as much as possible.

Hunter – Some of our actions have helped establish relationships

Connor – we need a repository for this information.

Hunter - Controlling misinformation is very difficult. Conspiracy theorists are rampant

10:31

Cross Mountain Canyon Acquisition - see slides

Hunter – our previous field manager was interested in achieving this acquisition. The acquisition consists of riparian areas along the Yampa river. In 2013, we acquired 920 acres along the Yampa River. We partnered with the Western Rivers Conservancy. It increased 2.9 miles of public access.

Carl – is this on the NW side of river?

Hunter – Yes. We will conduct tribal consultation as we plan for the future?

George – Why not allow a permittee do improvements.

Hunter – Purchase was intended to provide access to recreation

George – Are you working to water bank?

Hunter – We're not that far along.

Luke – there is no water being diverted to the east coast and it never will

Hunter – new management will need to make some decisions once hired. There is a real weed problem.

Mike – did the funding for acquisition include funding for planning?

Hunter – no

Barb – is there fluid mineral potential?

Hunter – not sure.

Presentation ends 10:46

Dean – just to be sure, the RAC is supportive of gather activities?

Unanimous concur

10:47

District and Field Manager Updates

Joe – We're working sage grouse issues and working on monitoring. The monitoring will help us with habitat improvement. Public databases are being developed that will help us with tracking disturbance.

John – It seems that leks make up 50% of BLM managed lands. Leks overlap but we don't see that reflected.

Joe – valid and existing lease rights still have a right for energy extraction. About 80% of the LSFO is already leased.

Joe – question I have back to the RAC, is how we do decision making between meetings.

Katie – we did this a lot with the Dominguez-Escalante NCA. We came to them with approaches and we think that helped. We met more frequently, but went through more details.... The building blocks of the alternatives....

Dean – in terms of even being able to discuss issues via a conference call

Steve Hall – The RAC can't meet over the phone without a FRN

Kent – if the RAC wants to meet, we still have time to do a FRN

Steve – We can do FRN's in two weeks but a month is plenty of time to get an FRN filed.

Boyd – FRN for RAC meetings are less complicated

Hunter – LSFO – See slides

Barb – Whatever happened to the easement

Dean - We continue to monitor but have been assured it diverts from the Tuttle easement.

Karl – CRVFO
Stephanie – Kremmling
See handout

Barb – When is your commissioner meeting, I'd like to go.

Kent – WRFO

Kent – The WRFO is a consolidated Oil and Gas field office. When Stephanie mentions, “we met in White River,” that is why.

Kent – we hosted a regional tribal consultation meeting in March. We try to do this twice a year as part of our consultation. It is a really positive thing we do.

Kent – Wild horse update. We counted 177 horses remaining in the area where we gathered horses last year. This was precisely the number of horses we thought we had. We have sought to gather additional horses.

See handout –

Carl – The planning 2.0 saves money and time with focused ethnographic and biological study and subsequent planning.

Katie – GJFO
See handout

Carl – Katie has done an incredible job creating a recreation mecca. I'd like to see a summary of all the things you've done. Maybe get a look at what the next stage is. Field trips.

Dean – that might be a good field trip idea

Katie – we have so much urban interface that if we don't manage it, it will come in destructive ways. One of my goals for myself towards that end, I'd like to do the same for the motorized community that we've done for the mountain bike. It is going to happen with or without us.

Joe – Thank you Katie, We have a great relationship with the field office and the NCA. We've been getting 5,000 students out yearly for education programs and I appreciate it.

Lori – With all the momentum with the governor's office and Colorado the Beautiful. I wonder is it appropriate for us to take a statement of the importance of our partnership and collaborative role. Is it possible to do some type of statement like this?

Luke – Someone could write a resolution supporting the BLM's recreation strategy

Lori – is it important for anyone else here for us to do this?

George – When we look at recreation opportunities, we need to consider impacts to wildlife. We're seeing, as more recreationists come into our county, it is done at the detriment of the wildlife.

Barb – And there's the cultural impacts

John – in 10 years you'll need to get a permit for mountain biking like you do for Ruby Horsethief

Mike – We all enjoy time on the landscape

Next meeting agendas 11:55 –

Mike – I'd like to get a context of BLM budgeting ie. Comparison of acreage compared to budget for context. For example, when we talk about wild horses, how much does that cost?

Kent – Travel management somehow on the next agenda

Luke – Sage Grouse implementation and CPW's role in it

John – Up in Moffatt County do grouse move during winter because of elk?

Dean – We can manage for weather conditions and less impacts on other species and take that information into consideration.

Joe – DENCA-RMP

Barb – Transwest powerline (revisit)

Karl – update on previously leased EIS

Barb – presentation on the BLM Colorado Rec strategy – Louis from the state.

Dave Boyd – The BLM is working a programmatic coal eis

Joe- things for us to improve upon
More questions based presentations
Information prior to meeting
Like to know value of FM update

Barb – I'd like opportunity to ask questions.