

BLM Resource Advisory Council

Final Minutes

January 28, 2014

Idaho Falls, ID

In attendance: Aaron Swift, Garth Blanchard, Kevin Poor, Todd Kuck, Joe Kraayenbrink, Linda Price, Dave Pacioretty, Matt Woodard, Karen Rice, Sarah Wheeler, Jeremy Casterson, Dana Olson, Marianne Little, John Jakovac, Chad Colter, Babette Thorpe, Joanna Wilson, Trish Callaghan, Stephen Bauchman, Shane Rosenkrance, Beth Waterbury, Louise Stark.

Round Robin Discussion

Joe Kraayenbrink welcomed everyone to the RAC meeting and thanked everyone for travelling to Idaho Falls, ID. Roundtable introductions were made by all in attendance. Joe K. presented a brief overview of ongoing activities on the Idaho Falls District including budget and staffing positions. BLM is hopeful the budget will be back to pre-sequestration levels for the fiscal year. Currently BLM staff approximately 130 positions on the operations side and 60 on the fire side. Joel Gosswiller gave a brief overview of fire management operations for the Idaho Falls District. BLM will be breaking ground on their new facility for the Snake River Hotshots this Spring. New members of the RAC were given an orientation in the morning and introduced to the full RAC in the afternoon. The RAC would like to welcome and thank all the new members.

Public Comments

None

Elections

The RAC unanimously voted to approve Kevin Poor - Chairman, Matt Woodard - Vice-Chairman and Aaron Swift - Secretary

Trish Callaghan– Salmon/Challis National Forest – Campground fee increases

- The Forest Service (FS) is asking the Recreation RAC for approval to increase fees from \$5 to \$10 per day at 9 campgrounds, and new fees at 3 campgrounds varying from \$5 to \$20 per day depending on the site. Each of these sites have had intense renovation with new toilets, picnic tables, fire rings, RV sites expanded and flattened, fencing, and much more depending on the site. The additional and new fees the FS is asking to implement will help with maintenance costs at the sites. A discussion amongst the Recreation RAC members occurred about public comments received as well as if a fee increase was necessary.

FS staff replied by stating only 2 public comments were received and that increasing the fee minimally would not tremendously effect campground users. Trish Callaghan stated that a few years ago several sites were approved to raise fees from \$5 to \$10 and the FS has not seen a decrease in use due to the increased fee. John Jakovac made a motion that the Recreation RAC accepts the Salmon-Challis National Forest proposal to increase fees at 9 sites from \$5 to \$10. Babette Thorpe seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously. Matt Woodard made a motion that the Recreation RAC accepts the Salmon-Challis National Forest proposal to implement fees at 3 sites varying from \$5 to \$20. Babette Thorpe seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

- Note: Kevin Poor will draft a letter of approval from the RAC to present to the Salmon-Challis National Forest Supervisor.

Field Office Updates

Dave Pacioretty, Pocatello

- Curlew/Deep Creek Travel Management Plan (TMP) – RAC formed a sub-committee for the TMP. The BLM has decided to select alternative E for the TMP and BLM have signed the plan. The public comment period for the TMP ended January 28, 2014.

Todd Kuck, Challis

- Draft EIS for Thompson Creek Mine expansion will be released to the public on March 2014.
- Record of Decision (ROD) for the Thompson Creek Mine expansion will be released first quarter of 2015.
- Update on Thompson Creek Mine/Broken Wing Ranch Land Exchange – The mine plans on donating the buildings on the Broken Wing Ranch to Custer County.
- Note: Kevin Poor will solicit RAC members who may be interested in joining a sub-committee to review the Thompson Creek Mine draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

Brent Ralston and Jessica Gardetto – BLM State Office – Greater-Sage Grouse Update

- Draft EIS is out and public comment period ended January 29, 2014. BLM held various open houses around the state to help inform the public on the possible listing of the Greater-Sage Grouse.
- EIS scheduled to be complete by the end of summer 2014 with ROD due on September 30th 2014. USFWS due to make their decision in 2015 on the status of the bird.
- All public comments will be incorporated into the final EIS.
- Garth Blanchard asked why hunting the bird was still allowed, BLM responded by stating that IDFG holds all authority on management of the birds.
- Garth Blanchard asked BLM staff for better clarification of all the Greater-Sage Grouse alternatives. Brent Ralston gave an overview of all the different alternatives and how each is defined. A table with all the alternatives was also sent to all RAC members.

Future Meetings

May 20th and 21st, Idaho Falls, ID – Possibilities include tour of the Big Desert and Pine Creek Bench.

September 9th and 10th, Salmon, ID – Possibilities include touring properties in the High Divide Collaborative.