



Twin Falls District Resource Advisory Council



MEETING MINUTES
4/21/2016

Resource Advisory Council (RAC) members present:

Category One – Commodity Interest

- Richard Austin
- Mike Henslee
- Greg Moore
- Brett Meyer
- Jamey Wills

Category Two – Non-Commodity Interest

- Shauna Robinson
- Peggy Stanley
- LaMar Orton

Category Three – Public Interest

- Jody Hawkins
- Tom Courtney
- Charles Howell
- Michelle Richman
- Hunter Osborne

Quorum Present: Yes No

Bureau of Land Management (BLM) representatives present:

Brian Amme - District Manager (Acting)
Elizabeth Maclean – Associate District Manager
Heather Tiel-Nelson- Public Affairs Specialist
Elliot Traher, Jarbidge Field Manager
Codie Martin, Shoshone Field Manager
Lisa Creswell - Planning and Environmental Coordinator (Acting)
Ken Crane, Burley Field Manager
Sue Kennedy, Burley Field Office Administrative Assistant

Public Attendees:

WK 'Buck' Moore – ATV User interested in BLM issues. Mr. Moore was interested in seeing improving recreational trail options on BLM land.

Note to readers: A copy of each handout listed in the text of, or at the end of these minutes, is on file with the official copy of the minutes in the BLM Twin Falls District Office. Persons desiring to view handouts should contact Sue Kennedy at (208) 677-6627, or by email at skennedy@blm.gov.

Copies of certified minutes are posted on the Idaho BLM website at: [RAC Minutes April 2016](#)

Item I: Welcome and Introductions

Twin Falls District Manager (acting) Brian Amme opened with a welcome and introductions.

Item II: Elect Chairman and Vice Chairman

The RAC Committee re-elected Mike Henslee as the RAC Chairman and Jamey Wills as Vice Chairman for 2016.

Public comment period opened at 9:20. There was one member of the public present. Public comment period closed at 9:50

Item III: Update RAC Subcommittee

Twin Falls District (TFD) RAC Subcommittees

Updated 4/21/2016

Wild Horse and Burro Management

Email – BLM_ID_TF_RAC_Wild_Horse@blm.gov

Charlie Howell – Chair

Mike Henslee

Jamey Wills

Peggy Stanley

Jody Hawkins

Gateway West Transmission Project

Email – BLM_ID_TF_RAC_Gateway@blm.gov

Jamey Wills – Chair

Brett Meyer

Hunter Osborne

Richard Austin

Cedar Fields Recreation Management and Travel Planning

Email – BLM_ID_TF_RAC_CedarFields @blm.gov

Shauna Robinson – Chair

Jamey Wills

Charlie Howell

LaMar Orton

Hunter Osborne

Jody Hawkins

Greater Sage-Grouse Habitat Management

Email – BLM_ID_TF_RAC_Sagegrouse@blm.gov

LaMar Orton – Chair

Mike Henslee

Michelle Richman

Brett Meyer

Jamey Wills

Tom Courtney

Richard Austin

Jodie Hawkins

New Subcommittee:

Wood River Travel Management Plan

Email – BLM_ID_TF_RACWoodrivertravel@blm.gov

Jamey Wills – Chair

Mike Henslee

Richard Austin

Charlie Howell

Greg Moore

Jody Hawkins

Item IV: Craters of the Moon National Monument Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Amendment

Lisa Creswell

Before leaving office, President Clinton expanded protection and efforts to preserve monument values. In 2008, Western Watershed Project (WWP) filed a complaint that BLM hadn't properly addressed sage-grouse and livestock grazing in the Resource Management Plan (RMP); in 2011 the court agreed. In 2012 the court ordered the BLM to reconsider the impacts of livestock grazing and analyze a no-grazing and a reduced grazing alternative; this Amendment is strictly for livestock grazing. In 2012/2013, BLM staff gathered additional data to update the habitat condition evaluation and adjust Animal Unit Month (AUM) numbers allotment by allotment based on allotment condition during permit renewal times which are every 10 years. BLM Shoshone chose option C because it is responsive to Court Order, protects monument values and sage-grouse habitat, and preserves cultural relationship on the land. Next steps are: the Washington Office will review and provide comments to the draft Environmental Impact Study (EIS); following necessary changes we will brief the ID State Director and then publish a Notice

of Availability and send out to the public for comment and have public meetings to respond to comments.

Questions:

** Charles Howell: Biotic Integrity means? – Codie Martin: make sure environment is functioning and all the species are present.

** Charles Howell: What are Kipukas? Lisa Cresswell: Areas of vegetation completely surrounded by lava

** Shauna Robinson: Are set aside areas for protection forever? RMPs are typically viable for 20 years. They can be changed when need arises.

** Greg Moore: When the local office chooses a plan, why is it changed? Brian Amme: Washington Office reviews for consistency and adequacy, but changes are made between draft and final based on public feedback.

Item V: Update on Wild Horses gathered following Soda Fire

Heather Tiel-Nelson

Last summer's Soda Fire burned 279,000 acres, and nearly 100% of the Sands Basin and Hardtrigger Herd Management Areas (HMA) and about one-third of the Black Mountain HMA. During the fire, 29 wild horses were killed and an additional six had to be euthanized due to the injuries sustained in the fire. The Sands Basin herd proved to be the most challenging to capture. Over nine days, 279 horses were gathered and then transported to the BLM Boise Wild Horse corrals. The corrals were open to visitors for five days during the gather so those interested could see the horses. As there is limited space at the Corrals, some of the horses were transported to Palomino Valley National Adoption Center. The studs were sent to the Bruneau Off-Range Corrals where they will be cared for until the range recovers and the horses can be returned. As the Black Mountain HMA was only partially burned, some of the horses were returned to the HMA, including mares that were treated with a fertility control vaccine before being released. There was an adoption in November and 39 were adopted. The Extreme Mustang Makeover is coming back to Idaho July 29 – 30, 2016 and trainers have been working with 25 Idaho horses that will be in the competition. Also mentioned the BLM/4-H partnership where 4-H members are working with young wild horses to offer more incentive to adopting a wild horse.

Item VI: Artist in Residence program

Krista Berumen, Idaho BLM Public Affairs Specialist

Idaho BLM celebrated the 50th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act by launching an Artist in Residence program featuring three Idaho based artists. The artists were hosted by BLM staff on a river and hiking trip of the Owyhee Canyonlands where artists were able to paint, photograph or write their impressions of the landscape and wildlife scenes they encountered. It's been a very enjoyable project and the artists' work has been featured during different social events in the Boise area. There are plans to expand the Artist in Residence program in different areas of Idaho. To view the artist's work, please visit: [Artist in Residence program, artist work](#)

Item VII: Sage-Grouse EIS Amendment Implementation Strategy

Ammon Wilhelm, Idaho BLM Wildlife Biologist

Discussed the different types of priority sage-grouse habitat and the thresholds for bumping against the disturbance cap.

Item VIII: Jarbidge Field Office update

Elliot Traher

Jarbidge Field Office staff is spending the majority of their time working to renew 96 livestock grazing permits.

Jarbidge RMP update. The RMP Implementation Plan is in the early stages to cover some “Big Ticket” items as seen in the Jarbidge handout.

Bruneau Canyon Overlook. We have been awarded \$300,000 to implement improvements at the Overlook; construction is expected by fall of 2016. RMP Wild horse Litigation: A lawsuit was filed in January 2016 by the Cloud Foundation, Return to Freedom and Virginia Marie Hudson concerned about a non-reproducing Saylor Creek wild horse herd.

Item IX: Burley Field Office update

Ken Crane

Cedar Fields:

Cedar Fields EIS will amend the Monument RMP to address the adverse effects from recreational activities to cultural resources within American Falls Archaeological District (AFAD). The field office is monitoring the AFAD making contacts with visitors to ensure understanding of resource values and the locations of existing closures. Monitoring is also occurring with traffic counters and cameras. With the addition of 100 new bolted routes published in the 2015 Climbing Guide, the Shoshone Bannock Tribes are extremely concerned associated impacts are continuing in their sacred areas. The next steps include a revised condition assessment by the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) and completion of Tribal and 106 consultation, then work to complete the draft EIS.

South Hills Trails: The Southern Idaho Mountain Biking Association engaged BLM to authorize approximately 40 miles of multiple-use trails in the Indian Springs area. The BLM has completed all clearances but put the proposed project on hold until the sage-grouse land use plan amendments were completed. SIMBA president reestablished contact this spring to see if the project could be reactivated. The project would be good for the community but the plan amendment places restrictions on new recreational developments such as these trail in sage-grouse habitat. The proposal will need to clearly demonstrate how the trail system will benefit sage-grouse.

Walker Ranch Geothermal: The Environmental Assessment (EA) analyzing an application for 17 additional wells is nearing completion. The staff is working with the State Office to determine requirements for mitigation damaged sage-grouse habitat. It is hoped an approved mitigation plan can be developed by early June and a decision mid-summer.

Baker Cave: An important archaeological complex located on the Wapi Flow was discovered by a local hunter. To prevent illegal looting of archaeological artifacts, the BLM conducted an emergency collection of the two caves. All artifacts were curated and are stored in the Idaho Historic Museum. The Shoshone-Bannock Tribes have made a recent inquiry about repatriation

of the Baker Cave I collection under the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act. An official request has not been submitted to the state office yet.

Item X: Shoshone Field Office update

Codie Martin

Beaver Creek Road: We have completed a categorical exclusion (CX) to address immediate impacts with work done in 2015 and initiated an EA to address the long-term rehabilitation and mitigation alternatives

King to Wood River Transmission Line --The transmission line rebuild crosses approximately 20 miles of public land in a Sagebrush Focal Area and the rebuild of the line will occur over the next two years.

North Rim Park: District staff met with user group representatives in December to discuss issues regarding Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) and shooting use of the area leased to Jerome County. A non-profit was created to help acquire funding and oversee the implementation of the 2007 Master Development Plan.

Ketchum Whitewater park R&PP. The assessment was completed in October 2015 and concluded that there were a number of areas deemed to not be functioning properly. BLM told the City of Ketchum that a modified proposal would be required to incorporate and address the study findings.

Lincoln County Transfer Station R&PP: Lincoln County Commissioners submitted an R&PP application to acquire approximately 30 acres of public land. The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been signed and outlines the roles and responsibilities for each party

Fire and Fuels Shrub Planting: Total Shrubs planted for last year's wildfires was 333,600.

Recreation: Spring Cove SRP. SFO amended the SRP on 3/30/16 adding pronghorn, bear, predator hunting, and incidental fishing and horseback rides to the permit.

Wood River Valley Travel Management Plan (TMP): Plan was put on hold in 2012 and SFO recently completed route evaluations for 578 miles of roads, primitive roads and trails in the Wood River Valley. A contract for development of the EA and the TMP will be issued in the fall of 2016.

Wildlife – yellow-billed Cuckoo ESA Consultation. SFO continues to conduct formal consultation on projects associated with Yellow-billed cuckoo habitat.

Grazing Permit Renewals: Habitat Assessment Framework collection began in April 2016 with preparation and verification of 110 sites. Poison Creek scoping packet sent out this winter and received numerous comments. Elkhorn permit renewal was appealed and expect hearing sometime this summer

Crater of the Moon National Monument and Preserve draft RMP Amendment/EIS: A draft copy has been sent to the WO for review. Next step is to publish the draft RMP/EIS for public comment and public meetings will likely be schedule during the 2016 summer

Other Business:

Next meeting will be June 17, 2016 at the new Twin Falls District Office at 0800 followed by a trip to the newest Bruneau Off-Range Wild Horse Corrals.

September 14, 2016 RAC meeting

Future Poster Presentations:

Ken Crane, Burley Field Manager

Michelle Richman, Idaho Department of Water Resources

Handouts Provided:

1- Field Office Updates

Minutes certified by:

//signed// _____
Mike Henslee, TFD RAC Chairman

September 20, 2016 _____
Date

//signed// _____
Elizabeth Maclean, TFD Manager (Acting)

October 05, 2016 _____
Date

Minutes recorded by:

Sue Kennedy, Burley Field Office Administrative Assistant