
IDAHO FALLS DISTRICT RAC MEETING

September 12-13, 2017

RAC Attendees:

Bill Schutte moved to approve the RAC Meeting Minutes for January 2017. It was seconded by Morris and passed unanimously with the change to add that the June meeting was cancelled due to Administrative Review.

Matt Woodard was nominated by Bill Schutte to continue as Chairman until his term ends in March of 2018. The motion was seconded by Jon Goode and passed unanimously. Jim Mende was nominated and approved as the vice-chairman.

Recreation RAC

The Recreation RAC met to discuss 5 forest service fees. In 2001 the fee demo project was started to study whether federal agencies can charge a fee for public access. The 2004 Recreational Enhancement Act (REA) provides the authority to charge a fee. It's an avenue for agencies to enhance their recreation sites when appropriation dollars are lacking. There are three levels of fees. Standard Amenity – We provide certain facilities. Trash services, picnic tables, interpretive panels etc. These are expectations that people have that they'll get something. Expanded Amenities – above and beyond Standard Amenities. This could be water and electrical hookups. Highly developed campgrounds, etc. and Special Recreation Permits (SRP)- this allows commercial operations to use public lands, adjusts for concessionaire fees.

Money collected at sites stay where it is collected from. Approval must come from the advisory committee, which was granted under FACA. RAC's have authority to approve because they represent a broad interest of people and Congress didn't want one interest group having control of the fee recommendation/approval process. Money obtained in this program is carried over year to year so agencies can make improvements.

Linda Price – Everything is audited by Washington so dollars are watched carefully. You can't pay for anything that doesn't help the site out. Kaye Orem with the Caribou-Targhee started out the discussion with the Caribou Guard Station Cabin. Ken Wixom brought up a concern with restrooms being blocked off to public land users at the cabin site. Dennis stated that the public who pays for the cabin should be the ones allowed to have the restrooms because there is an expectation...a fee and they get s service. Ken stated that the unintentional consequence is resulting in human waste by the creek and suggested FS move the fence to allow ATV's and side by sides the ability to access the restrooms. Kaye Orem said that it was something the FS can look into addressing.

Items regarding the other four cabins can be found in the attached pamphlet.

Fees from the program would be used to update and maintain cabin rentals. Tribal Treaty Rights would be in effect so if a Tribal member wanted to use the cabin they could contact the local office and work with them to reserve the site free of charge.

Bill Schutte: Asked about financial information and whether the FS should be in the business of renting cabins if they can't fund capital expenses out of their appropriated dollars.

Kaye Orem: The Caribou-Targhee tends to be able to break even with their cabins and don't intend to add any in the future.

The RAC talked about some concerns with how to pay for everything and whether salaries were included in the cabin O&M price (it was not). They RAC would prefer an accurate accounting of everything it costs to actually maintain a cabin. Dave Radford asked how long fees stayed in place. Kaye said this was the first fee increase on these particular cabins since 2004.

Morris Christensen stated that as far as resources go, people do have an expectation of what level of resource it is and how it needs to be maintained. We have to keep up with expectation. JoAnna Wilson said that we need to look at deferred maintenance cost, which isn't really included in the O&M. Jon Goode said he felt it was a reasonable fee increase and not extreme. Jon motioned to set the proposed fee increase and Bill Schutte seconded. It was unanimously approved.

Bike Trail in the Urban Interface:

Blaine Newman discussed the recreational issues occurring within the wildland urban interface of Pocatello. Mountain biking is becoming more prevalent as a school sport and last year the schools approached the BLM asking them to consider building a mountain bike race course so the club could host mountain biking competitions. Blaine discussed a proposed development occurring north of Pocatello that has a strip of federal land running through it.

The group headed to the location for a field tour of the proposed mountain bike course and the high dollar development.

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Met at Agrium's North Rasmussen Mine for a tour. The company mines more than 2 ½ million tons of ore a year during its 7 month shipping period. The group saw the tipple (which is a place where ore is taken from the mountain and loaded into cars). Agrium is able to typically fill 132 cars a day. It takes about four minutes to load one car. They try to blend high quality ore with lower quality ore to keep the best mixture of phosphate.

2nd stopping point – Woolley Valley to view the stockpile and Tipple. Old Conda Mine is visible from this location. China Hat is an old volcanic dome near the Blackfoot Reservoir. Town of Conda got its name from Anaconda and its supply of sulphuric acid to the phosphate patch over 100 years ago.

3rd Stop: Reclaimed road. The strip was an old haul road from the south end of the property. Native vegetation is seen growing 10 years later. Ore comes in layer and the unusable portions are either an external overburden pile or put back in the pit to refill the hole (preferred alternative).

4th Stop: Justin talked to the group about how phosphorous elements were formed in the ocean. When the mountains rose up around the material was exposed. The want to mine with the grain. They continue to sample ore as they mine to determine the quality.

5th stop: Interim phase on reclamation. The group looked at a backfilled pit. Higher levels of selenium are on the bottom followed by lower dinwoody cap and then top soil.

Agrium Plants employs about 500 people. 250 of those work at the mind and 275-300 work at the plant. They are high paying jobs that support the local economy dumping about \$50 Million a year back into the economy. 1 million of that is property taxes paid directly to Caribou County.

Jon Goode explained a highly simplified process of phosphate production (see attached table).

Tentative RAC meeting is scheduled for January 23, 2018.

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