

Northwest Colorado Resource Advisory Council
Minutes
August 20th, 2009
Meeker, Colorado

Attendees:

Resource Advisory Council Members

| | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Larry McCown, Category 3 | Pat Kennedy, Category 2 |
| Glenn Vawter, Category 1 | Dave Cesark, Category 1 |
| Gary Bumgarner, Category 3 | Dona Shue, Category 2 |
| T. Wright Dickenson, Category 1 | Jon Hill, Category 1 |
| Jeff Comstock, Category 3 | Charlie Kerr, Category 2 |
| Dean Riggs, Category 3 | Landle Weddle, Category 3 |
| Clare Bastable, Category 2 | |

Not Present: Steve Gunderson, Michael Perry

BLM Staff

| | |
|---------------------|---------------|
| David Boyd | Pete McFadden |
| Steve Bennett | James Roberts |
| Jamie Connell | Don Miller |
| Catherine Robertson | Katie Stevens |
| John Husband | Anna Callahan |
| Kent Walter | |

Public:

| Visitor | Representing | City |
|------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| Donna Gray | Williams Production | Parachute, CO |
| Sasha Nelson | CEC | Craig, CO |
| Dave Stoffle | Public | Maybell, CO |
| Jason Musser | Public | Maybell, CO |
| Brandon Hoskin | Public | Craig, CO |
| Dr. Lisa Pollard | Public | Meeker, CO (Wyoming) |
| Jay Fletcher | Senator Udall | |
| Soren Jespersen | The Wilderness Society | |
| Kathy Hall | WSC of A | |
| Luke Schaffer | RAC Subcommittee | Meeker |

T. Wright called the meeting to order at 8:03 a.m.

A quorum is present.

Jamie told the group that we do not have word the about nominations for this year.

Kent introduced Associate Field Manager, James Roberts.

Jamie recognizes members with expiring terms: Dave Cesark, Jon Hill, Dona Shue, Larry McCown, and Charlie Kerr.

T. Wright says RAC website is very difficult to find anything on. RAC info not easy to access. Need to discuss.

John Husband, Shed antler hunting

Issues raised at last meeting – impact to resources, commercial activity.

BLM discussing what to do – new policies or maybe we don't do anything. Varies by area of the state, not an issue everywhere. Could enforce travel management in conjunction with this activity, or wildlife harassment laws. Maybe require permit for commercial collection. Big concern with commercial activity

T Wright: Two issues – is there an issue we need to deal with it; if so, how should the RAC weigh in?

Dean: Some in DOW are concerned, primarily with commercial aspect including illegal take of animals. In Gunnison, motels fill in the spring with antler hunters. Hard thing to enforce. Other state wildlife agencies have regulations/seasons for antler hunting.

John H: Utah requires an ethics class for antler hunting.

John H: No consensus on direction BLM should go in Colorado at this point within BLM. Managers, law enforcement, recreation folks participating in a committee. Some offices more willing to do this than others. Need to work closely with DOW – we only have jurisdiction on federal lands.

Jeff C: Don't doubt there are problems. Reaction is to resist any action to control it. Other than commercial activity, enforcement can already handle all other concerns with this.

Don Miller: We can already go after them for commercial activity.

John H: We have to establish how to define commercial in this case.

T. Wright: Agree with Jeff. Utah regulations have led to everyone coming to Uinta Basin. Think it is a problem now. ATV tracks, big use as the result of antler hunting. Look at seasonal closure. Last five years.

Jon Hill: Big cultural difference between Utah and Colorado in terms of ATV use. Utah users less apt to stay on the road. Utah people are coming over here now.

Dave C: Laws on the book now. That should be first step. Would help with education. Severe lack of enforcement already because not enough officers.

John H: Nothing you can cite somebody right now for commercial use that would hold up in court. Might define commercial use by the amount of antlers.

T Wright: Not commercial for most folks even if they are selling – not generating a profit. Clearly recreational experience.

Kent: Still a lot of issues, don't want to jump to decision.

Larry: Need to manage the area. Close areas seasonally if need – that's easier than defining commercial, etc.

John H: If it's the wrong time of year for people to be in an area, should control all uses during that time, not just a single use.

Dean: been ramping up last decade. Huge influx of people where didn't occur before. Has BLM taken action in any other areas?

James Roberts: In Wyoming you could go into an area walking, no motorized activity.

Dave C: A lot of RMP revisions/amendments – is this being looked at?

Catherine: Having discussion with DOW as part of RMP. Statewide might do a rule like what we do for paleo resources (certain amount OK)

Jeff: This is someone tearing up ground on an ATV or harassing wildlife. Hesitant to enact new policy for this issue. ID the problem that cannot be addressed right now.

T. Wright: RAC can tell BLM this is an issue and encourage them to use authority. Don't have a solution for what is commercial activity – RAC could help with that. Need to highlight with the public that this is an issue

T. Wright: Bump back through RMP subcommittees to ask if this is an issue?

Catherine: RAC member with knowledge can do op-ed.

John H: Glad to have RAC involved, vet issue with public

Jon: Need to define commercial before we do more

Glenn: Would like to know what other states are doing?

Jon: similar to commercial use firewood and personnel use.

Pat K.: McInnis Canyons

Pat K.: River, mountain biking, motorized use, resource, etc. subgroup. Stay as own group or change into subcommittee of NW RAC. Consensus on this change. Work as subgroup under RAC with all the same rules.

T. Wright: Official request to charter the subgroup

Jamie C.: Doesn't have to be broken down into 'teams', but can be. List of different interest groups to be represented.

Pat K: Currently in place as RAC members, continue on as subcommittee to NW RAC.

Catherine R.: Current categories: Legislation, Permittees, representative of issues in resource area (Mesa State, environmental, paleo, mountain biking, OHV, etc.)

T. Wright: Approval? Issues of terms?

Jamie C.: Group to decide on charter. Approve group now, come back with charter (term structure, organization) to approve later. Bless current group and current activities.

Katie: Group continue as representation

Catherine: Categories are really loose, look at same model as RAC. Long term uses that need to be represented.

Larry M.: Independent decision maker, do their recommendations come to RAC?

Katie: Recommendations would go to Jamie to bring up at the NW RAC

T. Wright: Endorse nomination of existing McInnis Canyon group to be subgroup of NW RAC, come up with charter (terms) for membership and bring back for

Motion Passes Unanimously

John H.: Charter up this year.

Kent W.: Good language of what a sub-group is for re-charter.

Charlie: Chairman, motion that language be included in revised charter?

Jamie C: Motion to start working on re-chartered

Motion Passes Unanimously

E-mail Current Charter out to everyone.

Conversation about secretary & presidential visit and dedication of McInnis Canyon NCA

Catherine: Gave secretary plaque to give to present to the president. NW RAC thanking for support on McInnis Canyon NCA.

Public Comment:

Dave Stoffle: Maybell. I am a shed horn hunter, I don't do it for profit, and I do it for my own collection. I understand you haven't come up with anything set in stone; over half of people on BLM say it should be regulated to walking March to June and have yet to be stopped by or be seen by BLM or DOW officer. How do you plan on coming up with something new when what is now not being enforced. Might ride four wheeler down road then walk, four-wheeler tracks where they shouldn't be. Can't enforce, have more requirements.

Brandon Hoskin – Craig

Jason Musser: Maybell. Same line as Dave out there a lot. Don't see anyone out there regulating what we have now. Hard to take bad rap for people who are bad on environment and chase animals. Do it with my boy and my friend. Has pile of horn that fills half of garage, I don't sell them, I do it for pleasure. Been doing this since I grew up, my boys do it now.

T. Wright: The paper you see is draft outlining issue. Group decided it is issue we want to continue to work with. How should we address or handle issue. Looking at whether we should handle it with current policy (existing authorities) or come up with new.

Pat K.: This may be considered dispersed recreation. With mountain biking, put together organization that goes out and 'does it the right way'. BLM staff involved. Self regulate and convince bad people do not do what they're doing. Set an example.

Jeff C.: Similar comments. At what level is it fun and what level is it commercial.

Jason Musser: Pay fees through hunting tags, four wheeler, tags for boat, and pay taxes. My public land just as everyone else's. There for us to use, we use it in a manner, go and walk around. Everyone else uses it in a manner go and take their dirt bike four-wheeler. I did it for a long time and you would have to collect a serious amount of horns to make a profit drive a long we spend more on going out than what we would make collecting.

Dean R.: Get a feel on where you go, do you run into a lot of other people?

Dave Stoffle: At times. Before Utah season opens. Browns Park crowded with Utah people as is Rangeley. See four wheeler tracks and motorcycle tracks all over where they shouldn't be. We do a lot

down in Sand Wash basin. People can tear up where they want. Should be posted better where that ends, county roads 46 put this is not an off highway vehicle area to keep it spreading out.

Jason Musser: One thing that bothers me is that people go from NW CO Meeker on private and public land. Go down to Browns Park. Right across from Ranger station proposed wilderness, four wheeler tracks right from start of walk. Take care of the people who are doing this illegally.

T. Wright: Really appreciate it.

Landle W.: If you ever see the elk herds, late winter, early spring do you feel like you are harassing them? Do you ever see people doing this?

Dave Stoffle: We back out; we don't chase them we go around them. In Brown's Park we drive down highway and we get to walking and if we run in to them we quit. We don't see them but we hear of them (people causing problems). It's them people that we need to stop because they are causing the problem. Thanks for your time.

Field Manager Update, Grand Junction Field Office, Catherine Robertson

RMP Revision: The GJFO has almost completed the Analysis of the Management Situation (AMS) and the Community Assessment. Both of these documents will be posted online in August.

The GJFO interdisciplinary team (IDT) has held three internal alternative development workshops and has continued to give presentations to the Cooperators and RAC Subcommittee for the interested programs. Alternatives will continue to take shape through September and the Cooperating Agencies and RAC Subcommittee will have numerous opportunities to respond to the alternatives.

Based on the public's interest, the BLM has opened a 30-day comment period from July 20 to August 21, 2009. This period is focusing on gathering the public's desired future conditions for the GJFO travel route network. Comments have been rolling in and will be used to draft travel management alternatives for the RMP this fall.

Once alternatives have been developed this fall, the GJFO will analyze the impacts of each alternative to disclose in a Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The DEIS will be the public's next official opportunity to comment.

Recreation: BLM recently published our Supplemental Rules for both Bangs Canyon and the North Fruita Desert. Publication of the Supplemental Rules in the Federal Register is one of our requirements to finalize the rules. This is the public's last review of the Supplemental Rules, which were proposed to implement the management changes in both the Bangs Canyon and North Fruita Desert Plans. Public comments on the Bangs Canyon Supplemental Rules will be accepted until September 21, 2009. Public comments on the North Fruita Desert Supplemental Rules will be accepted until October 5, 2009.

In April, GJFO went before the Colorado Recreation Resource Advisory Committee with two fee proposals. A fee increase from \$5/night to \$10/night at Mud Springs Campground was approved. The Rec RAC asked for more information on a second proposal to begin charging fees at North Fruita Campground. As you may recall, a second meeting was scheduled in Kremmling on July 11 to further discuss the proposed fees at North Fruita Campground. This meeting was cancelled and has yet to be

rescheduled. Due to this extended timeline, we will be unable to implement fee collection in North Fruita Desert campground for at least the remainder of the calendar year and possibly longer. This is one of several challenges we have faced with the Colorado Recreation RAC and we are currently researching avenues to improve the current process.

CAM/Red Cliff Coal Mine: Based on comments received on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, BLM determined that a Revised Draft EIS will need to be prepared in order to consider alternatives to the proposed coal lease area. The Revised Draft EIS will focus on this issue and it will also analyze impacts on the Hunter Canyon Citizen Wilderness Proposal. Responses to other comments will be included in the Final EIS. The Revised Draft EIS should be completed in late 2009.

Oil and Gas: Aspen Drilling's Whitewater leases have been transferred to Fram Americas LLC. Fram is in the process of revising the Whitewater Master Development Plan. They are also working to bring existing operations into compliance with BLM requirements.

Construction has begun on the Collbran pipeline (from Plateau Valley to Parachute), the Garmesa pipeline along Highway 139, and the Enterprise pipeline on the utility corridor near Logan Wash.

NEPA analysis is continuing on the Black Hill Master Development Plan (MDP) northwest of Debeque.

Oxy's Bowdish MDP near Conn Creek and Retamco's Roan Creek MDP are on hold, pending more information from the operators.

Augustus completed their Geophysical exploration on July 14 in the desert near Highway 139 and Badger Wash. The project was monitored closely by BLM and impacts were minimal. A final compliance check will be conducted in the next few weeks.

The Augustus APD for a well near the Mitchell Road was approved on July 27.

Disposal of produced water remains a concern to industry. The EnCana and Oxy injection wells north of Debeque have been approved.

Hunter Canyon, Black Hill Mine

Jeff C.: Concerned about whether or not wilderness ground was expanded to stop mine. I don't think land likely to be wilderness should be managed differently

Catherine: Recent legislation on FLPMA have current inventory of resources. Someone proposed that lands had wilderness character and after that is considered they may or may not agree.

Jamie: We also disclose impacts.

Charlie: Capture and sell methane so it is not just released into the air. (Will be part of EIS) Ask Catherine if that is being looked at as possibility? We do not want to see it released.

Catherine: Is being looked at and is hopeful.

Larry: Will the change in the capturing of methane require new application? Who will they be dealing with, State and Feds?

Catherine: Currently methane isn't part of coal lease, is part of gas lease. Has to be changed in Washington. Currently they have Oil & Gas leases on top of what are already leases. Want to capture methane but there are economical issues.

Mountain Island Land Exchange: A Notice of Exchange Proposal will be published in the newspaper in August 2009, which will begin a 45-day public comment period. The proposal involves the exchange of 788 acres of federal lands for 576 acres of private lands in Glade Park to consolidate public land ownership, provide important public access to the Timber Ridge area and to acquire an inholding within the McInnis Canyons NCA. Comments received will be considered in the EA for the exchange. Appraisals of the federal and private lands are planned for late summer/early fall 2009. The public lands that are proposed for exchange have no legal public access.

Law Enforcement: We have one LEO Ranger who recently graduated from the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center. He will begin his Field Training September 1, and will be fully functional shortly after. Major Law enforcement incidents over the past few months include participation in a complex investigation into illegal artifact collection and sales. The investigation has made national headlines, and Secretary Salazar has praised the investigation. Locally, we continue to experience issues with illegal outfitters (mountain biking, hunting), squatter camps, and OHV issues. A new law enforcement ranger for the newly designated Dominguez-Escalante NCA has been approved and should arrive in FY 2010. This Ranger will be involved and instrumental in future planning and resource issues for the DENCA.

MCINNIS CANYONS NCA

Over the past six months, NCA staff have been conducting initial outreach regarding increasing visitor use on the Colorado River and the potential for consideration of a fee and permit system to manage proactively in light of that use. Now, the active work of developing the proposal itself has begun. NCA staff has asked the McInnis Canyons Advisory Council to assist in development of this proposal, and the Council began its initial consideration of the issue by holding a listening session related to fee and permit concerns at its July 16 meeting. The proposal will be developed over the fall and winter, with consideration by the statewide Recreation RAC and additional opportunities for public comment in 2010.

Proposed supplementary rules were published for the NCA and comments are being accepted until September 11, 2009. These rules are the final step needed so that BLM can enforce the decisions made through the 2004 Resource Management Plan, including camping only in designated areas, and using a fire pan or toilet system on the river. The average public user will see no change in BLM's management of the NCA as a result of these rules. NCA staff has been recommending that the public follow these measures since the RMP was adopted in 2004.

In July, members of the Joufflas family gathered in Rabbit Valley to watch their husband, father, and grandfather, Chris Joufflas, install a sign naming a trail on Wild Horse Mesa for their family. The naming

of this trail recognizes the significant contributions the family has made by passing historically private ranching lands into public ownership in the NCA.

DOMINGUEZ-ESCALANTE NCA

Within the next several months, nominations will be accepted for individuals to serve on the Dominguez-Escalante National Conservation Area Advisory Council. Three members will be appointed after considering the recommendations of the Mesa, Montrose and Delta County Commissions; one will be appointed after considering the recommendations of the permittees holding grazing allotments within the Conservation Area or the Wilderness; and the remaining six members will reside in or near Mesa, Delta, or Montrose County and will have backgrounds that reflect the purposes for which the Conservation Area or Wilderness was established; and the interests of the stakeholders that are affected by the planning and management of the National Conservation Area and Wilderness. The call for nominations will be publicized in area media, and forms/instructions will be available on the web at <http://www.blm.gov/co/st/en/fo/denca.html>. Nomination forms will also be available at both the Grand Junction and Montrose field offices.

McInnis Canyons NCA Manager Katie Stevens is serving as Interim Manager for the NCA and will coordinate the nomination review process, as well as serve as a point of contact for early inquiries related to the NCA.

Secretary Salazar formally dedicated the new NCA Aug 12. The event was attended by more than 100 people and generated a good deal of press coverage.

Dona Shue – Wild Horses

T. Wright: Dona, present resolution.

Dona: At previous meetings I needed to come up with resolution to send to DOI and National Wild Horse Advisory Group. Drafted Resolution Changes.

T. Wright: Have to make necessary amendments in act, or add to act, to humanly dispose of horses in holding facilities. Public is saying they will adopt X amount of horses. What is ecologically feasible on range? Those two factors are scientific basis for AML (heard level). The American public accepts approximately 5,000 horses. Financial crisis in BLM with too many horses.

Jeff: Factors in willingness for public to adopt horses.

Dave C: Is there is a sunset on this willingness to export?

Dona: Two separate things. Export current horses in captivity and gives BLM a chance to do things better and avoid the excess of horses building up.

Jon H: Use 75% of entire wild horse budget nationally.

T. Wright: Go out and use authorities you have now; creative solution to bring this thing into balance.

Dona: If you free up budget from holding facility, then more money is available for management of horses on the range for sterilization, etc

Jon H: BLM may have to do more sterilization or capture more horses to be able to begin this program, this needs to be in the resolution.

Clare: What does it mean for horse euthanasia?

T. Wright: We need to present this to wild horse advisory board. Euthanasia won't happen because the Bureau won't take that step. But this resolution states that there is a need to be able to dispose of excess horses currently in captivity, to free up money to manage horses on the range. You also need to bring AML in line with what public is willing to adopt. Bold statement on our part, but necessary. Have to address to 36,000 horses currently on the range.

Catherine: Little Books Cliffs involved in immuno-contraceptive program. Very successful. Did not have funding for that program to continue.

John H: Good approach. AML is tied to what's adoptable, this is a good concept. Court cases say you have to show that the horses are excess based on range monitoring. Can't just set AMLs on what we can adopt.

Kent: Need to work on language based on existing horses.

Dean: Is the turning loose of domestic horses something we need to consider?

T Wright: This is partly a result of ban on exporting horses

Jeff C: The proposed resolution doesn't include a limit of horses based on carry capacity – need that.

Clare: Explain what the other side of this would be?

Dona: Emotional issue. A lot of people see the wild horses as a vibrant national symbol. Everybody immediately assumes euthanasia when you start talking about these steps. That might be part of it for specific animals. If wild horses are not managed better than they have been, there will be a time that there are fewer horses, or only in very remote areas. Have to make some tough decisions for the betterment of the horses.

Jamie: We have authority to euthanize horses now. We just haven't done it.

Dona: Wild horse in holding pen is not having a good life.

Kent: Laws are already written. If you had opportunity to expand adoption outside of US, expand pool of adoption. Need to add something about expanding adoption pool internationally, might not need the part about AML tying to willingness to adopt.

Pete McFadden, Junction Butte Wetland Management Plan

Pete: Update on Junction Butte. Fence building began on Monday to address cattle trespass that keeps happening. Summary of Exchange, project background. Grazing and haying are being considered. Started out with a prescribed burn last fall, burned again this spring on the west side. Ditches were improved.

T. Wright: (Penny's Request) Is BLM going to maintain agricultural practices that will maintain its past state (this is why RAC endorses the land exchange). BLM wanted land for access to river and because it was a wetland area. Irrigation did not continue, and this is what would maintain riparian area. All about wildlife management not agricultural practices.

Gary: Community heard it would be duck ponds. This is why the pumps showed up. Irrigation during spring.

T Wright: Keeping it irrigated is essential, also to keep water rights. You have to hay and graze it.

Jeff: Does this prioritize this for agricultural use?

Pete: It is prioritized for wildlife.

Charlie: Compromise situation where grazing is used to maintain wildlife priorities.

Larry M: Need someone to look back at minutes and if RAC did suggest management for agriculture they submit legal document.

T. Wright: Form work group to research minutes and look through BLM plans to come back with management suggestions.

T. Wright: Without actual irrigation the vegetation will change. There has to be a reasonable compromise.

Dave Boyd will track down minutes from approximately 1996 on.

Jamie: Asks that Kremmling needs to research what the RMP says (NEPA).

T. Wright: Volunteers to help Gary with this?

Gary & Clare will work on this team.

Wild Horse Resolution

Dave C: Would like to see animals exported before option of euthanasia.

T. Wright: Read through resolution for language.

Clare: Put in first paragraph that the goal is to maintain healthy herds.
Whereas, the NW RAC is interested in maintain a healthy level of horses.

Larry: Heart of the resolution is that if we can adopt horses out we will.

Clare: Take out third-world countries and how does famine relate to this?

Dona: If we were able to sell them to countries that will eat them then they still have a viable use.

Dave: Have the slaughter of horses and burros' be a last resort. Exporting them may solve problems.

Jon: Use all disposal tools prior to euthanasia.

Kent: Congress recognizes that euthanasia be a means of disposal after all other management options are exhausted. Therefore that ban should be rescinded.

Dona: There is only one ban, bans any slaughter, which would in effect allow all.

Kent: I know that I've commented on this before, one other comment. Last part, how, as an organization are we going to coordinate the foal crop.

T. Wright: It is simple math.

Larry: The annual production of foals will be based on last year's adoption numbers?

John: It would be slowly gathered data.

Dean: Third one up is a whereas statement.

Jon - Motion

Larry - Seconds

Motion is passed unanimously

Clare: Concerned that we haven't heard from both sides of this. We haven't heard from people who would be giving us "heat". I always like to hear whole spectrum.

T. Wright: Besides the inhumane treatment of horses, we can't gather them. Somebody has to step up and say enough is enough

Jamie: Situation in Wyoming that judge is keeping them at the AML numbers. Required to round them up, knowing they can only adopt out a portion of them. Horses aren't being adopted and going to the holding facilities.

Clare: This provides backing to save money and not have to deal with it. Massive slaughter.

Dona: BLM is required to have wild horses and manage them. We want to help them successfully manage them.

Jamie: We need to have the authority to euthanize again.

T. Wright: A million acres can't carry 30,000 head. A million acres won't do it.

Jeff: We preserve the wild horse and burro act, we aren't trying to undo anything.

Public Comment

Luke: One question, missed the morning, timeline on the shed collection? When public comment might come in?

John: We are at the very beginning. Do some public outreach.

Jamie: Involved in RMP efforts, make sure you get into discussion through RMP process

Luke: Other question, the way I understood it is BLM has essentially not allowed ranchers to round up horse s and break them and sell theme. Why isn't this in there? When markets are high, viable option, not a solution.

John: There is no market.

T. Wright: Not a problem to catch them the problem is getting rid of them

Sasha: I think you're headed in the right direction with resolution, proud to see you taking the steps. Couple concerns, you ask, "What is the other side saying" and with CEC cap off, I got a letter yesterday from Pueblo saying herds are not genetically viable. I would say as a scientist a resolution puts so much focus on market of horses stopping the propagation of horses on public land. But if you cut up your management to what is adopted the only foals you have are the ones that are taken out.

John H: This isn't the entire management plan is just an approach.

T Wright: Welcome Congressman Salazar. Thank you for voting no on horse legislature.

Salazar: Thank you for passing the resolution. On my ranch we have over 300 head of wild horses that come in a trample alfalfa. People also dump their horses (on public land). T Boon Pitkin's wife is trying to get federal money to start big ranch in Nevada. Can't have any more horses on range, we just have too many. I am also a big elk and deer hunter so I want to leave some food for the deer and elk.

This isn't a democratic/republican issue. Willie Nelson and Brooke Shields (support this) and are sitting up in gallery debating horse ban. If my horse fell in a prairie dog hole and broke his leg I would shoot him furthermore if I was out on a winter day and it was between me surviving I would eat him I think people meant it as a good resolution impacts on BLM, DOW. It is horrible to see a gelding turned out on a wild horse bunch. It is not pretty.

T. Wright: I think that in addition to the resolution it would be of significant impact someone could present this to wild horse advisory board. Is that an authorized for travel reimbursement.

Larry: Would like to see us go to the other RACs. If you had unanimous consensus of all of Colorado it would speak louder than just us.

Dave: Forward it (resolution) to other RACs in the state.

Jeff: Do both at same time. Present it to national wild horse and burro and present it to other RACs.

Field Manager Updates:

John Husband, Little Snake Field Office

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act: The Little Snake Field Office will have some funding available from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, ARRA (economic stimulus bill) to support a few proposed projects in the LSFO management area. The proposed projects include:

1. Adding a photovoltaic system to the proposed facility for the Craig Hot Shots to be built next year at the location of the current HotShot barracks;
2. Gravel re-surface of 3 miles of the East Cross Mountain Road;
3. Energy Efficiency improvements to the HVAC control system for the LSFO building;
4. Vegetation enhancement and fuels projects to include brush beating, juniper removal, or other vegetation treatments to support habitat enhancement and fuels reduction;
5. Additional cultural resource surveys in support of the Sand Wash travel Management plan development.
6. Conversion of windmill to solar powered livestock water systems.

Additional projects could be funded at a later time if additional ARRA funding becomes available.

Oil and Gas: 24 Applications for drilling permits were processed thus far FY 2009. Wexpro has suspended drilling until early 2010. We expect drilling activity to be on par with last year, but activity will be more for development wells than for exploratory wells.

The Rock Springs and Little Snake Field Offices continue to work with Questar and other cooperating agencies on a proposed energy development project that could include up to 4,200 new wells. About 33% of the new wells would be in Colorado. BLM is currently working through issues related to sage-grouse habitat and air quality. The Draft EIS is now scheduled to be complete in February 2010.

Questar Management Inc., BLM-LSFO, and SHPO are pursuing an agreement on how to handle archaeological discoveries during oil and gas development in Hiawatha and Powder Wash basin. During recent development, discoveries of archaeological sites have been increasingly common, necessitating a way to protect those resources with less time delay.

Coal: Colowyo has a new approved permit for highwall mining in Federal Lease COC29225; 402,995 additional recoverable tons of coal will be mined that would have been bypassed.

Peabody Twentymile Coal Company submitted a request to mine additional coal in the western part of their mine area. The request is for an approximately 1.4 million recoverable tons by underground methods. They are also conducting coal exploration drilling and geotechnical for the new Sage Creek Mine. Two ventilation shafts for the Western Mining district are being drilled on private land.

In September, Trapper Mine will begin mining in the slide area of the east pit using their new truck/loader system. One of the mine pits experienced a major slide about three years ago, and is it now not minable by conventional dragline methods. This new equipment will allow recovery of coal that otherwise would have been bypassed.

Locatable Minerals: BLM received a new notice for placer mining exploration at the site of the old Joker Mine. Plans are for auger drilling of some 40 holes of up to 50' deep exploring for gold.

Cultural Resource Management in Moffat County: Moffat County is sponsoring a grant to study a large cultural site being impacted by a designated vehicle route in the vicinity of Vermillion Canyon. The site, which is eligible for the National Historic Register, was discovered in 2007 during a field investigation to determine effects of an ATV incursion on a medicine wheel feature near Vermillion Creek. The site lies along the last 200 yards or so of an unimproved two-track that dead-ends before dropping down into the canyon. The two-track is part of a Moffat County R.S. 2477 assertion, so LSFO and Moffat County went to the field and discussed options to protect the cultural site and respect the access claims. There are no apparent options to reroute the two-track because of the extent of the site and terrain limitations. The grant would pay for a survey, which would utilize ground penetrating radar in an effort to determine if there are any subsurface features associated with the site. The results could allow the BLM and Moffat County to better understand the site, address the cultural resource issues, and provide opportunities to address the County's concerns related to access.

Moffat County and BLM have signed a programmatic agreement which would make Moffat County a "consulting party" in the Section 106 review process for undertakings involving Moffat County permits, Moffat County Highways (including RS-2477 assertions), and non-routine actions requiring consultations with the Colorado State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO).

The Vermillion Chapter of the Colorado Archaeological Society was recently awarded a \$90,000 grant to conduct research oriented surveys in Sand Wash. The surveys will include examination of features

thought to be sources chert used in making stone tools. BLM will contribute another \$30,000 to the project. The project will indentify and improve our understanding of the rich cultural resources in Sand Wash, provide information that will be useful for BLM travel management planning, and enhance cultural tourism opportunities. Moffat County and others provided letters of support for this grant application.

Recreation Management (Emerald Mountain): The LSFO was successful in securing a \$30,000.00 trail construction grant from the Colorado State Trails Program to complete the Ridge Trail on Emerald Mountain this year. Together with our partners in the LSFO is pursuing additional grant funding for Emerald Mountain development.

Tamarisk Beetle Release: The LSFO received and released 6,000 Tamarisk Beetles on a tamarisk infestation in Temple Gulch near Duffy Mountain and the Yampa River. The beetle release in the first on BLM lands in the LSFO Northwest Colorado and is a part of our integrated management program to control tamarisk in the upper Yampa River Valley.

RMP Update: We have prepared the Notice of Availability (NOA) for the Little Snake Proposed RMP/Final EIS. Release of the Final EIS is pending Washington review and approval.

Fire Management - as of August 8, 2009: The fire season got off to a slow and wet start for the Northwest Colorado Fire Management Unit this season. Above normal precipitation and cool temperatures limited fire activity in May and June. As we came into July, warmer and drier conditions became more continuous and our fire numbers began to increase. Activity has been heavy the last two or three weeks, fires are spreading faster and getting larger, and the numbers of resources required to manage the fires is increasing. So far this summer, the Unit has had 153 fires that have burned a total of 5,780 acres. Most of these acres involved BLM and private land. In the last 10 days we have had 2 large fires, one of about 1300 acres southeast of Rangely and one just under 2100 acres west of Maybell. Extended weather forecasts indicate warm and dry conditions to continue so we expect continuing activity through most of August. An average season for this area is between 220 and 240 fires with 3000 to 3500 acres burned.

Glenwood Springs Field Office, Steve Bennett

Pitkin County discusses, tables resolution regarding proposed land exchange in Garfield and Pitkin counties – Western Land Group is pursuing a legislative land exchange involving BLM and other federal lands in western Colorado. BLM does not have a position on this exchange because it is being pursued legislatively. The proposed exchange has recently been in the news because of the Pitkin County Commissioners' interest.

Under the Western Land Group proposal, BLM would acquire a 520-acre parcel adjacent to the popular Red Hill Special Recreation Area in Garfield County. The parcel has high wildlife habitat value and high recreation potential. BLM would exchange two parcels in the Glenwood Springs Field Office:

- a 1,268-acre parcel in Pitkin County south of Carbondale, which is mostly surrounded by private land and is difficult for the public to access. The current livestock permittee would acquire this parcel under this proposal. Pitkin County has concerns about exchanging this parcel but has not

yet taken a formal position. Pitkin and Garfield counties recently toured the areas with the Field Office and Western Land Group.

- a 195-acre parcel on Horse Mountain southwest of Eagle in Eagle County. The Eagle County Commission supports exchanging this parcel. This is a very difficult parcel for BLM to manage. It has previously been identified for disposal.

Western Land Group has received letters of support for the exchange from Aspen Valley Land Trust, Red Hill Council, Eagle County Commissioners, Town of Carbondale, Eagle Valley Land Trust, Town of Marble, Prince Creek Homeowners, and Udall Consulting. Although Pitkin County tabled a resolution opposing the exchange, the County Commissioners and Open Space Department have expressed concern about a net loss of public lands in Pitkin County.

RMP update: The Glenwood Springs Field Office continues to work with Kremmling Field Office and TetraTech to resolve the Chapter 4 issues dealing with the format and technical adequacy. We also have experienced delays from our National Operations Center related to the processing of contract modifications. These issues required Glenwood to suspend further Cooperating Agency and RAC subgroup meetings until we get a revised Chapter 4 and the pending contract modifications approved.

TetraTech will then revise the schedule for the remaining planning tasks and we will reschedule the remaining Cooperating Agency and RAC subgroup meetings. We did get comments from these stakeholders on Chapters 2 (Alternatives) and 3 (Affected Environment) and will share the consolidated comment tables with both groups prior to rescheduling the additional meetings.

We do not expect to have a final draft available until late spring/summer of 2010 due to the delays discussed above and the time needed to complete the air modeling.

Move update: The Glenwood Springs Field Office, including the Energy Office, is relocating to a new building in Silt, CO. We are currently scheduled to move into the new building in September. The Glenwood Offices will close one week before the new Silt office opens. Our address in Silt will be 2300 River Frontage Road, Silt, CO 81652. We are still waiting to hear what our phone numbers will be. The December NW RAC meeting is scheduled for the conference room in the new building.

White River Field Office, Kent E. Walter

White River Oil and Gas RMP amendment update: The BLM White River Field Office (WRFO) is developing an Oil and Gas Resource Management Plan Amendment and Environmental Impact Statement (Oil and Gas RMPA/EIS). Chapters 1, 2, 3, and 5 are in completed final Draft. The four Alternatives look at a range of development from 550 multi-well pads up to 2550 multi-well pads, with an average of 8 well per pad. The WRFO launched the quantitative analysis for the development of Chapter 4, the Impact Analysis chapter in June 2009 with an anticipated completion in early June 2010. An updated Air Quality Assessment is anticipated to be completed in spring 2010. Work is also underway to develop a Resource Management & Monitoring Protocol (RMMP), designed to serve as a cost-effective and publicly accepted approach for landscape-change monitoring and assessment. From a fundamental perspective, the RMMP is an RMPA implementation strategy that has two objectives. First, to determine the most efficient way to inventory and monitor surface disturbance and reclamation activities, with the inventorying and

monitoring being completed via some combination of geospatial technologies and fieldwork. The second objective is to develop an assessment protocol, using landscape metrics and fieldwork-results, to determine the ecological effects of landscape change related to O&G development. We anticipate a Notice of Availability for the Draft Oil and Gas RMPA/EIS to be published in the Federal Register in winter 2010. This notice initiates a required 90-day public and agency review/comment period for the Draft RMPA/EIS, as well as dates, times and locations of public meetings/hearings that will be held during the same time period.

Oil Shale RD&D update: WRFO is currently reviewing the Plan of Development (POD) received on May 19, 2009 from American Shale Oil, LLC (AMSO). AMSO is currently drilling geo-hydrology wells and tentatively plan site construction of the surface facilities during the first quarter 2010. An exploration plan was received from Shell for the multi-mineral lease late July. Chevron and Shell are analyzing information gathered during their geo-hydrologic drilling and continue to work on a plan of development.

Range Program

WRFO is working on the 2009 grazing permit renewals; plans are to finish all permit renewals by September of 2009. There are 31 renewals scheduled for 2009, there are currently 11 renewals pending. Field work is starting for our 2010 permit renewals. Grazing Fees have been set for the 2009 Grazing Season, and will remain at \$1.35/AUM.

Fire and Fuels Program

Two of the three planned prescribed fires on the agenda for FY 2009 have been completed, East Jordan and Carl's Hole. The staff is working on rehab plans for this summer's wildland fires, Crooked Wash, Duck Creek, Spring Creek, Denny, Mellen, Scenery Gulch.

Weed Management

WRFO will continue its weed program for 2009. One career seasonal employee has been hired to oversee field operations and will hire two seasonal employees to spray weeds and monitor spray projects during the summer. There will be a contract offered to continue helicopter spraying in certain treatment areas. Currently we have completed approvals for 43 pesticide use proposals (pups), there are 2 pups pending.

Wild Horses

On August 5, 2009 the court ruled in favor of the Plaintiffs and set aside the 2008 Gather Plan for the West Douglas Herd Area. Plans are continuing to be made to gather the approximate 16 head of horses off of the Magnolia Bench east of Piceance Creek as well as completing a partial gathering of 100 head in West Douglas in FY2009 as long as funding remains constant and litigation is completed.

Recreation Program

WRFO will be holding an open house meeting for all permitted Outfitters to discuss the current issues with Special Recreation Permits and future permitting processes.

Pipelines and Infrastructure Projects

Construction is restarting on the Overland Pass NGL line from Greasewood Hub to Wyoming after winter shutdown. Construction pre-work has begun on the 24 inch Williams Northwest Pipeline Colorado Hub FERC project. Route selection has begun for the Gateway South and TransWest transmission lines

(500Kv AC and 600Kv DC) from Wyoming to Nevada which will pass through northwest Colorado. WRFO continues to work with Rio Blanco County's Piceance Creek RBC Rd 5 Project.

ARRA Projects:

Two projects have been approved for the office under the Stimulus Plan. One is the White River Field Office Travel Management Plan which falls under the Trails Maintenance and Construction category. The other is the Missouri Creek Road Repair project which falls under the Roads and Bridges Maintenance and Construction category. Planning is underway for both projects.

Public Comment

Luke: Have communication problems with subcommittee. Want to involve public to a greater degree.

T. Wright: More people and more public meetings

Kent: When draft comes out public is better prepared to comment.

T. Wright: Money for public meetings, where will they fit

Kent: We could get support if we asked for it.

Luke: Not asking the RAC to take over the WRFO RMP but asking if they want to be more involved in the public comment process.

Jamie: Don't cut subgroup off from this group, they are not a stand alone, independent group

T. Wright: Two fundamental questions to address, public comment and additional members.

Jamie: Add members and tell us what their backgrounds are, who the original people are and what they know.

Kent: Opportunity for subcommittee to reach out.

T. Wright: Want to cover the spectrum of interest appropriate to this planning effort.

Luke: Mid October will have names and interest areas.

Kent: Should have names ready for December meeting.

Larry: Status of the Roan, and the lawsuits?

Steve: Bill Barrett Corp bought leases. Don't know about settlement discussions. September first there would be no surface disturbance prior to that date.

Jamie: Plaintiffs, interveners, and BLM there would be no surface disturbance until after July 1st.
September 1st decision.

Sued on whether or not NEPA was adequate, air, cumulative effects, range of alternatives.

Agenda Items for Next Meeting:

O & G issues with Kremmling – timeline. Fred Conrath. Questar. Geology and project. Area specific

Charter: what to add to subgroup language – email current charter out to everyone

Fee for river usage: Ruby Horse Thief – fee and reservation system- law enforcement

Browns Park – Archaeology issues consistency between field offices

Alternatives for Oil and Gas and RMNP (1 hour)

Field Trip: Drive down the Colorado River corridor and discuss wild and scenic issues.

T Wright: Meeting adjourned