

Northwest Resource Advisory Council
MEETING MINUTES
 Thursday, May 17, 2007
 Fairfield Center
 Meeker

ATTENDEES

Resource Advisory Council Members

Kathy Hall, Category 3	Steven Gunderson, Category 1
Jeff Comstock, Category 3	
Dave Cesark, Category 1	Jon Hill, Category 1
Pat Kennedy, Category 2	Larry McCown, Category 3
	Forrest Nelson, Category 3
Clare Bastable, Category 2	John Martin, Category 3
T. Wright Dickinson, Category 1	
Dona Shue, Category 2	

Not present: Charlie Kerr, David Bailey, Duane Daily

BLM Staff

Joe Stout	David Boyd	
Jamie Connell		
John Husband		
Catherine Robertson		
Kent Walter		
Brian Hopkins		
Visitors	Representing	Town/City
Luke Shaffer	CEC	Craig
Chad Kennard	CEC	Grand Junction
Jay Fletcher	Sen Salazar's office	Craig
Brian J. Meinhart	Sen Allard's office	Grand Junction
Logan Hill	Public	Rangely
Lee-Ann Hill	CEC	Clark
Jane Yazzi	Public	Craig
L. Yazzi	Public	Craig

Called to order at 8:13, A quorum is present.

Dave C thanked Kent for open house yesterday

Managing for Excellence Jamie Connell

Draft of proposals is out within BLM for employees' review. A package is being sent to RAC members from the State Office. Please take a look at it.

Dave C. is concerned about timing, wants RAC involvement. Want to write letter to State Director, may ask for delay in decision until RAC weighs. Affects RAC

Catherine: May not be able to delay. May have to have special meeting

T Wright: Timeframe before Aug meeting

Jamie: Decision not final until WO approves. Probably need to have an additional meeting

T Wright: Recommends that we would hold a special meeting. Set date at this meeting

John H: Points out that the packet is now due to WO at end of August. Initial schedule was much more aggressive. We have more time now.

Glenwood Springs, Jamie Connell

Protest resolution on Roan continues: BLM continues to work through the 42 protest submissions it received during the 30-day protest period on the Proposed Plan. Many of the protests are long and complex. A Record of Decision, or final decision, will be issued following resolution of the protests.

Members ask about the Salazar/Udall proposal to withhold funding for leasing Roan in FY 08.

Dave C. RAC very involved in the Roan issue for quite some time. Concerned about this proposal

Larry: Garfield County is currently involved in four planning efforts. These actions by Udall and Salazar severely erode the cooperating agency process. This proposal comes directly after they held meeting in Glenwood with just a select group, a very political group that did not include the BLM. They have completely thrown 8 months of very hard work out of the window. I'm not very happy about it. I'm not sure if its worth time to spend as cooperating agency when it can all be changed at the last minute like this.

Kathy: RAC spent a lot of time on it. We had a working group just on the Roan. Suggests RAC write a letter to Salazar and Udall stressing amount of time that has gone into planning. Need to send statement made by RAC to the Congressmen. It's irresponsible to

say public has not been heard. We need to remind the Congressmen that this has been a public process all along

Jeff C: We took testimony and evaluated comments ourselves

Kathy: That legislation transferring to BLM from DOE came from Garfield County, Rifle. Bill Clinton signed legislation.

T Wright; In addition to sending the letter to the Congressman, we need to resend the recommendation from the RAC and description of everything we did back to BLM in Washington. I agree with Larry about such efforts eroding the cooperating agency process. WO needs to be reminded of what we did, the seriousness of what we did. We try to find common ground, what is that worth if we are not going to be listened to?

Clare: Wasn't part of RAC when that resolution was passed. I want to point out that there are different perspectives on this. Other cooperators made strong statements opposed to drilling, Glenwood, Rifle. Governor has asked for more time to review the Proposed Roan Plan as well. There are more sides to this, but I respect position that you all came up with.

Jeff: BLM has a very big problem with openness with cooperators. Hiawatha and White River process felt like we've been left out. Some cooperators are included, others aren't.

T Wright: Clare, thank you for those comments that you respect what RAC did. I appreciate that kind of attitude. We should continue to try to find common ground. Don't think constituencies are best represented if everything changes with each election. The work that has been done before is very important.

Jon: Work that went into Roan could be used as model for other efforts.

Kathy: All voices were heard throughout this long process. They are not just now being heard.

Dave C: Calls for vote to write letter expressing concern about the Congressmen's proposal in light of all the past work that has been done. All vote aye except Clare Bastable.

Letter: Remind of process on Roan, that a resolution was passed before. What the RAC has gone through, and recommendation. Send to delegation, appropriations committee, BLM Washington Office and State Office.

Clare: Votes nay. Respect process that's occurred, but need to understand where I'm coming from.

Kent: Does RAC send to delegation directly?

Jamie: Send letter to me, the DFO, with instruction to send to people you ask

Energy Office fully staffed, works Energy Expo Booth: The Glenwood Springs Energy Office is now fully staffed. A number of Energy Office staff helped staff an Energy Office booth at the EnCana Energy Expo in Rifle May 2. This was the fifth year of the Expo, and fifth year of BLM participation. This was the first year the Forest Service helped staff the booth. Staff stayed busy all day answering a large variety of questions from the public.

Volunteers help with a variety of clean-ups: On May 12 more than 40 volunteers spent their Saturday re-routing sections of the Scout Trail on Lookout Mountain near Glenwood Springs. The volunteers built new switchbacks to replace a steep section of trail, which will help prevent erosion and make the trail more rideable and enjoyable. On May 5, members of the High Country 4-Wheelers and other local volunteers removed a large amount of garbage, scrap metal, tires and abandoned vehicles from the Lookout Mountain area. The City of Glenwood Springs City Council provided free use of the South Canyon Landfill to dump all the garbage that was collected. Also on May 12, six “volunteers” from the Eagle County Jail removed more than 8 pick-up loads of trash and tires from Dotsero Crater.

Clare: new switchbacks great. Biked on Sunday

Work continues on building relocation: GSFO is working with the Denver Service Center on the location for its new building. BLM has asked for bids to be submitted after reviewing about 20 potential sites in Glenwood Springs, Newcastle, Silt and Rifle. Regardless of location, a new, energy-efficient building will be constructed.

GSFO hosts Battlement Mesa staff ride: Nearly 100 Federal employees participated in a national “Staff Ride” May 1 and 2 at the site of the 1976 Battlement Creek Fire fatalities. Staff Rides are an opportunity for fire personnel and managers to study specific incidents by visiting the actual locations. In 1976 three firefighters died and another was severely burned when they were overtaken by fire while fighting the Battlement Creek Fire. A pilot also died in a separate incident on the fire when his plane crashed.

Will invite RAC for the staff ride next year.

Little Snake Field Office, John Husband

90-day public comment period closes on Little Snake RMP: The public comment period on the Draft Little Snake RMP/EIS closed May 16. As of May 14, LSFO had received about 58,000 comment letters. The vast majority are form letters from national environmental organizations supporting concepts in the conservation alternative (Alternative D). LSFO has also received quite a few letters from OHV and snowmobile users asking BLM to implement the travel management actions from the No Action Alternative (Alternative A). LSFO received other substantive comments regarding

wildlife habitat, cultural resources, and other issues. A Record of Decision is anticipated in summer of 2008.

Number probably closer to 80,000 comments now. Still mostly form letters from one or two websites.

Current RMP has $\frac{3}{4}$ open to cross country travel. Vast majority in preferred goes to limited to routes with 21,000 play area. Snowmobile closures will be reexamined based on public comments.

Did get requests for more time from EPA, USFWS, but did get comments from them. DNR wants an additional 45 days to review and comment. We will get back to them. We are trying to be consistent. State Director will respond.

Trying to get proposed plan out in November 2007.

John M: If non-cooperators are allowed extra time, are you vulnerable if you don't allow more time for the general public?

John H: These actually are cooperators. They can comment whenever they want. If they are too late, we won't be able to consider their comments.

John M: IF you get caught on something, it's usually on a technicality. This might leave you hanging out there.

T Wright: Thanks John H for a great job on the Little Snake RMP – for a great process, great public meetings.

Jeff: This was reflected at the recent energy summit in Craig. John was the last item on agenda on a Friday afternoon. Yet the majority of folks waited around to hear the BLM discussion. John did great job on this process.

Project Archaeology workshop to be held at LSFO: The national Project Archaeology program, based at Montana State University, is hosting a teacher workshop for upper elementary teachers June 14 and 15 at the Little Snake Field Office. Participants will learn the basics of archaeology and investigate data from a rock shelter site. They will have the chance to explore the ethics of archaeological research, as well as engage in dialogue using the information gained through authentic inquiry. Project Archaeology is a national network of archaeologists, educators, and concerned citizens working to make archaeology education accessible to students and teachers nationwide through high-quality educational materials and professional development. This program is funded by Kinder-Morgan Company and El Paso Corporation, as part of the Rockies Express Pipeline and the Wyoming Interstate Company Piceance Basin Expansion Pipeline project. This particular training is being conducted as a partnership among BLM, Metcalf Archaeological Consultants of Eagle, Colo., and Alpine Archaeological Consultants of Montrose, Colo.

Northwest Colorado Fire Management Unit organizational changes: Recently, there were some organizational changes at the Northwest Colorado Fire Management Unit (NWCFCMU) hosted at Little Snake Field Office. The NWCFCMU is an interagency fire organization that serves about 9 million acres in Grand, Jackson, Routt, Moffat, and Rio Blanco counties. It includes State and County cooperators, BLM, US Forest Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and National Park Service. BLM and USFS mutually agreed that the Medicine Bow-Routt National Forest and Thunder Basin Grassland (MBR&TBG) would form its own fire management unit and will no longer be a voting member of the NWCFCMU. This was a business decision based on the complexities of managing the MBR&TBG fire and fuels program across state lines (Wyoming and Colorado), declining budgets, and the operational difficulties this has created for the NWCFCMU. Interagency coordination will continue with the MBR&TBG being involved as a member of the Craig Interagency Dispatch Center Coordinating Group (along with Cooperators) and participate as a non-voting member at NWCFCMU board of directors meetings.

We expect few, if any, changes will be experienced by on-the-ground fire personnel and other partners and cooperators. Primary involvement and point of contact for cooperators will be through the Craig Interagency Dispatch Center Coordinating Group. The Annual Operating Plans and “closest forces” concept will still be in effect and should ensure that all areas within the NWCFCMU will be covered. We are developing a protection agreement, which identifies initial attack zones and modifies existing agreements to accommodate the revisions.

Hiawatha work continues: The Rock Springs and Little Snake field offices continue to work with Questar and the Cooperating Agencies on a proposed energy development project that could include up to 4,200 new wells. About 66% of the new wells would be in Wyoming. The project schedule was delayed due to Questar’s requested modifications in January to the Proposed Action. The Record of Decision is now anticipated for November 2008, which is approximately 5 months after the target ROD date from the previous schedule. This reflects time for Questar to develop their Guiding Principles, which more clearly define their proposal for development of the project area. The proposal includes strategic, concentrated development in seven "Focus Areas".

The next cooperator's meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 30, 2007 at the Rock Springs Field Office. Cooperating Agencies on this project are the Wyoming Game and Fish Department, Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality, Wyoming State Geologic Survey, Wyoming Department of Transportation, Wyoming Department of Agriculture, Wyoming Oil and Gas Conservation Commission, Wyoming Office of State Lands and Investments, Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office, Wyoming Business Council, Colorado Department of Natural Resources (Colorado State Land Board and Colorado Division of Wildlife), Sweetwater County Commission, Sweetwater County Conservation District, Moffat County Commission, Northern Arapaho Tribe and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Jeff: Moffat County wants to be more involved in this planning effort given its formal cooperating agency status

T Wright: Concerned that they are going to be able to have rehab keep up with drilling schedule in that cold desert country. Reclamation can be done, but the long-standing appeal to companies has been to minimize disturbance. Need to emphasize reestablishment of native vegetation. Don't agree with the 2-year window for 90 percent rehab they are talking about. Need to demonstrate they can keep rehab up.

John H: Agree with you. We told them their acreage figures seemed pretty conservative. Aggressive reclamation in an area that's pretty tough to reclaim. We're after results. If reclamation isn't working, they would need to slow down until they find something that works

T Wright: Rock Springs seems to think fencing and mulch is rehab. I hope that Colorado reclamation standards would apply to Wyoming – Colorado has a much better approach.

Jamie: Colorado staff will be traveling to Wyoming to discuss BMPs, reclamation, to look for some areas where we learn from each other.

Emerald Mountain Implementation: The long-awaited Emerald Mountain Land Exchange closed on February 22, 2007. The 4,139-acre Emerald Mountain parcel just west of Steamboat Springs is now public land managed by BLM. As part of the exchange 123 isolated BLM parcels in Routt County totaling 15,416 acres were transferred to private ownership, primarily to adjacent landowners who held the BLM grazing permit. BLM is working with the Emerald Mountain Partnership, City of Steamboat Springs and other partners to develop a detailed implementation plan for the area. Until the planning is completed public access will be day-use, foot travel only. We plan to be ready to build trail later this summer. City of Steamboat Springs has applied for GOCO Grants for planning and implementation. The Emerald Mountain Partnership is planning a celebration on August 16.

Aug 16 is next RAC meeting. Perhaps can include RAC. Celebration is scheduled for afternoon.

Grand Junction Field Office, Catherine Robertson

Community Development Plan for Palisade & Grand Junction Watersheds:

Coordination work continues on the CDP for the municipal watersheds with Genesis Gas & Oil, the Town of Palisade, the City of Grand Junction, the owner of Saddle Mountain Ranch, Mesa County and BLM participating. The working group hosted public meetings in December and again in January to hear from the public on concerns that should be addressed within the CDP. A public workshop was held on April 25. The Town of Palisade hosted an additional meeting to hear public concerns on May 9. The public comment period ends on May 31. The draft is being revised in response to public input.

Final plan in August. Enviro has taken it to task because it's voluntary. Yet it's based on Antero's plan, which is lauded by enviro groups. Trying to make sure people understand BLM's process. Have come up with some very good BMPs. Plan will be updated as BMPs improve. A number of workshops have been held.

Gateway Area Projects: The GJFO is working under an agreement with Arizona State University to conduct a recreation study in the Gateway area. Focus group meetings began in April for the purpose of gaining information needed to guide the Gateway Area Recreation Management Plan scheduled for development in 2008. Another round of focus groups will take place the week of May 14. On-site surveys have begun and will continue for the next several weeks.

Jeff; What is ASU collecting?

Catherine: What recreational benefits public would like to see, are they getting those now? What kinds of things can BLM do to help you get what you want out of recreation experience.

Jeff; We did similar thing on Little Snake. Other than oil and gas, became most controversial part of RMP.

Catherine: All of us are doing this benefits-based management assessments. Includes focus groups, not just surveys

Clare: Are you having trouble getting enough people for focus groups?

John M: Unique project. Gateway needs to involve local community as well as invited guests. Didn't hear you say difference between local and invited guests.

Catherine: Already had focus groups with local groups. Gateway not driving the bus, it's our bus. Resort is extremely aware that need comment on what's already there, and having those areas available for other users. No system of trails are there right now. This will be regional area.

Pat: There's not a population base involved in this area right now. I was involved in a focus group. We were pulling in other locals. There is not a big constituency out there right now to say, "This is what we want."

John M: If you build it they will come. Eventually guests will be minority of users once word gets out

Pat: This group came to Catherine to find out how to do it right. May have ability to segregate uses – OHV and mountain biking, e.g. The process on right track.

Bangs Canyon Implementation: Gates and signs have recently been installed on the Tabeguache Trail, closing it to motorized vehicles between Monument and Little Park Roads. Parking has been redirected from Third Flats, off Little Park Road, to the Bangs Canyon Trailhead.

CAM/Red Cliff Coal Mine Environmental Impact Statement (EIS): The revised schedule for the Red Cliff Mine EIS proposes completion of the EIS and signing of the Record of Decision in late 2008 or early 2009. Data collection, including delineation of the waters of the United States and special status plant species inventories (Grand Buckwheat); will be completed by May 2007. Issues to be addressed in the Environmental Impact Statement being developed include access, safety concerns on railroad crossings, visual impacts of new power lines, habitat impacts to wildlife, social impacts, and air and water quality.

Energy Development Environmental Assessments: Current third party contracts in the GJFO include Plans of Development with Laramie Energy, OXY Oil and Gas, Delta Petroleum, Black Hills Exploration and Production, EnCana USA and Aspen Operators for oil and gas projects; Energy Fuels Resources Corporation for reopening of two uranium mines (the Whirlwind Project) near the Colorado/Utah state line.

South Shale Ridge: In February 2006 Earthjustice, on behalf of The Wilderness Society, Center for Native Ecosystems, Sierra Club, Colorado Mountain Club and Colorado Environmental Coalition filed a complaint against the BLM and the US Fish and Wildlife Service challenging the NEPA adequacy of the 2005 Environmental Assessment completed for Oil and Gas Leasing in South Shale Ridge. All evidence has been submitted by all parties in the case as of February 9, 2007 and oral arguments begin June 17, 2007.

GJFO to hold public meeting on Dominguez WSA: Following the model for the Delta community meeting on Dominguez/Escalante, there will be a public meeting in Grand Junction on June 14 regarding the Dominguez Canyon Wilderness Study Area. The meeting, co-hosted by Mesa State's Natural Resource and Land Use Policy Institute and Mesa County, will gauge community consensus on the future direction for the WSA and surrounding lands. Will present draft of zones based on what we heard at meeting. Then have groups work on specific zones.

Horse gather in Book Cliffs in September: Heavy involvement with Friends of Mustang group who will help gather. Usually spend about a week on the range to help figure out where animals are, so we can set up traps near where they are (minimize impact on animals). Groups help sort gather, group has specific knowledge of herds.

Kremmling Field Office, Joe Stout

Blue Valley Exchange: Kremmling Field Office staff has sent comments to the proponent's contractor on the draft the Environmental Assessment for this exchange. The contractor is reviewing the comments and working towards a preliminary EA, which will

be released for public review. The results of the recent Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Study are also being incorporated into the EA. Three segments of the Blue River that are included in the exchange proposal have been determined to be eligible for study. These segments will be undergoing a suitability analysis in conjunction with the Kremmling RMP Revision effort.

RAC has asked to see preliminary EA before it goes out to public. Will have a public meeting.

Gore Race canceled for 2007: The 2007 Gore Canyon Race has been canceled due to inadequate promotional support, according to race organizer Mark Joffe. More than 225 participants and 500 spectators attended the Gore Race August 2006. The Gore Race is a national competitive whitewater race through Gore Canyon southwest of Kremmling that has taken place the past 18 years. Close coordination among the Bureau of Land Management, race organizers, Union Pacific Railroad and Grand County helped ensure the event has gone smoothly over the years.

North Park Stewardship Project progressing: The Kremmling Field Office is partnering with Jackson County on the North Park Stewardship Project, which would harvest merchantable mountain-pine-beetle-infested lodgepole pine on about 150-200 acres on Independence Mountain. The Jackson County Board of County Commissioners should have their application filed with BLM by the middle of May. KFO's Forestry and Fuels Programs continue to plan timber sales and hazardous fuels treatments associated with this project.

Hope to have contract in place.

T wright: What is the reason for it going slow?

Joe: The agency. It's a big project over its life. We are working with the Washington Office.

T Wright: What can RAC do to help? Appalled that anything related to forest health should take this long. Should we write letter?

Joe: It's close now. Everyone has learned a lot now. Things should go more smoothly in future, and we can share what we have learned with others. Contracts can take a long time.

Pat: What about field trip in August?

Joe: We have a request to see the technical 4x4 route outside Kremmling.

Jamie: I heard the County blocked plans for pellet factory.

Joe: Kremmling proposal still in the planning stage.

Jamie: Glenwood has EIS with USFS on about 50,000 acres. Problem is where will we take all this three-inch diameter product?

Jeff: What about the Troublesome Closure? Want update.

Joe: Closure still in effect until get through travel management gets done.

John M: Is closure only option that was looked at?

Joe: It was the only option we looked at. Gave private landowners permits to access their property.

John M: Requested that local managers analyze emergency closures annually.

Joe: This is not just hanging out there with no deadline. The closure is only in effect until travel management plan is done.

Clare: Second part of our recommendation was to look at these closures through planning, which is what they are doing in this case.

John M: But they just put this in with the RMP effort, they didn't look at this separately.

Joe: The travel management will be a comprehensive look throughout the entire Field Office.

Also new Field Manager Dave Stout starts this summer. He brings a lot of BLM experience and we're looking forward to his arrival.

White River Field Office, Kent Walter

Oil Shale work progresses – Leases have been issued for the five RD&D projects. The Field Office so far has received a plan of development for one site (from Shell). A number of geohydrological wells have been approved for drilling on Shell and Chevron sites to begin gathering baseline water resource data. Companies are securing State of Colorado permits. Anticipate second POD from Shell later this year. EGL and Chevron re doing work to determine what POD will look like.

The Programmatic EIS covering commercial oil shale leasing is anticipated to be released for a 90-public comment period this summer. Public meetings on the draft will held during this comment period. Cooperating agencies were recently given a two-week extension to review the draft before it is released for the 90-day public review (cooperators can also provide comments during this period as well). The cooperators' review period now runs until June 15, 2007.

For the past year a multi-agency group has been meeting monthly. Started with RD&D, then included PEIS, now also included all energy in general. Counties, EPA, DNR, etc. Have also held meetings with states on regulatory writing for oil shale – Denver, Salt Lake. Cheyenne

Draft regulations for oil shale to be out in 08.

A lot of coordination and communication. Don't have oil shale leasing program right now.

Washington Office continues work on West Douglas protests: The Washington Office is currently working on the responses to protests received on the Environmental Assessment authorizing the removal of the wild horses in the West Douglas Herd Area. A lawsuit filed by the Colorado Wild Horse and Burro Coalition is currently pending on the West Douglas decision as well as last fall's gathers from the West Douglas and the East Douglas/Piceance herds.

Hearing and arguments have taken place. We are waiting for a Decision Record to be issued after resolution of protests.

Pat: What is nature of protest?

Kent: In a nutshell, want to see wild horse herd managed at West Douglas

BLM signs Decision Record on ExxonMobil Piceance Development Project – The Bureau of Land Management has approved the ExxonMobil Piceance Development Project. The project includes ExxonMobil's natural gas drilling activities and related infrastructure in the 29,680-acre Piceance Development Project Area, 15 miles west of Meeker. Much of the proposed development will occur in existing gas fields in this area which have been in continuous operation since the 1950s. The approval includes up to 20 new multi-well pads with as many as nine wells per pad, a new gas processing plant, new pipelines and other associated infrastructure. Environmental impacts will be reduced by not allowing construction of 1.6 miles of new access road to the gas processing plant nor the use of large-scale evaporation ponds for produced water, as originally proposed. The decision also includes nearly 130 required mitigation measures. The Environmental Assessment analyzed the cumulative impacts over the next 30 years of 120 new multi-well pads in the project area. The decision follows Alternative B in the EA, the environmentally preferred alternative.

WRFO teams to bring Pow-Wow to Meeker – The White River Field Office is partnering with the US Forest Service, Meeker Chamber of Commerce, and the Meeker Historical Society to bring the 1st Annual Northern Ute Pow-Wow to Meeker July 27-28. The free cultural event will be held adjacent to BLM land in Meeker's Ute Park and feature dancing and drumming contests, local and Ute arts, crafts, and food vendors.

Kent will get info out about funding for this Powwow to the RAC members

With energy activity out here, we are requesting additional budget increases for staff. I have 15 open vacancy announcements, nine are completely new positions. Housing is one of the issues we are dealing with out here. Prices are going up, demand is high.

Traute Parrie will be District Ranger in Red Lodge Montana. Vern Rholl is retiring.

Dave C: Traute and Vern have done great job, they will be missed.

T Wright: I am concerned about this issue of turnover, what's happening now and what's upcoming. A lot of new folks in line. My advice is send new people to collaborative workshops to learn how to involve local communities. How can RAC encourage Bureau to bring new folks up to speed on collaborative processes? We need a broader discussion about how to educate BLM folks about how to do business in the NW RAC area.

John M: Industry had same problem. People with specialized skills don't always have people skills.

Kent: Good point. Readiness level – getting people from outside Bureau who may have not had such training.

Jeff C: I think the biggest problem is that contractors don't have those skills. Need to educate contractors who are working on these plans in collaborative processes as well.

Dave C: Need a new hire orientation

T Wright: Need to find success stories such as Malapai

Steve: What is in BLM guidelines rules that guides collaboration? What is the process?

Jamie: Direction coming all the way down from Secretary of the DOI. Cooperating agencies, RACs. Put emphasis on managers that collaboration is important, leaves it up to them to determine best way to do that in their respective communities.

Catherine: Partnership series. Hard to get new people up to speed on their own discipline, which is what we need to do first. Managers can set example of good collaboration.

Jamie: And we ask questions about collaboration in job interviews

T Wright: Wants this as **Future agenda** item

Larry: Energy Office great example. Can use those folks

Catherine: We also need to educate local government in best ways to work with federal agencies

Jamie: RAC could use official sub group to work with new employees and members of the public.

Public comment

Jay – will take any comments back to the Senator. Will talk to Jamie about pellet plant

Informal Working Groups for the NW RAC (5-17-07)

Tours/field trips -- Clare Bastable (2), John Martin (3), T Wright Dickinson (1)

Recreation – Pat Kennedy (2), Steve Gunderson (3), Clare Bastable (2), Duane Dailey (3), Kathy Hall (1), John Martin (3), Dona Shue (2)

BLM Planning Process review – T Wright Dickinson (1), David Bailey (2), Steve Gunderson (3), Clare Bastable (2)

Invasive species – Jeff Comstock (3), Jon Hill (1)

Wildlife – T Wright Dickinson chair (1), Jeff Comstock (3), Forrest Nelson (3), Dave Cesark (1), Claire Bastable (2), Charlie Kerr (2), Dona Shue (2)

Cultural Resources – David Bailey chair (2), T Wright Dickinson (1), Pat Kennedy, Duane Dailey (3), Dona Shue (2)

Energy and Minerals – Larry McCown chair (3), Jeff Comstock (3), Dave Cesark (1), Charlie Kerr (2), John Martin (3), Kathy Hall (1), Jon Hill (1)

Northwestern Colorado Stewardship – Kathy Hall (3), T Wright Dickinson (1), Forrest Nelson (3), Jeff Comstock (3), Jon Hill (1), Dona Shue (2)

Field trips—everything RAC does is open to the public unless there are private property invitations, which will have to be looked at individually case by case. Abolish field trip group.

Add cat 2 to invasive species group

Kent: I need RAC involvement in the White River Plan Amendment. Talk about more this afternoon

Recreation group – deal with issues that pertain to recreation

Jamie: Issues will arise that we would bring to the group

Jon: should keep them, like invasive weeds

T Wright: Ad hoc to deal with issues as they come up. Can be proactive

Larry: Informal working groups different than actual sub committees. RMP issues would be better from official sub committee can include members other than RAC.

Planning process review committee—trying to meld collaborative process with planning process that doesn't allow it. Was to look at how to improve collaboration from BLM employees and contractors.

Jeff C: Should there be a wild horse group?

T Wright: Can re-establish as needed.

Catherine: Need something that talks about what a sub committee is, what a informal working group, and how they both work, for new members.

Catherine suggests invasive species group get together with BLM specialists regarding joint efforts with County Weed management plans

Invasive species committee formed to address weed spraying costs, concern over BLM not doing enough

Pat volunteers to be on invasive species committee

Next meeting item: GSFO and GJFO weed management

T Wright: Suggests wildlife group get something together re: white-tailed prairie dogs. DOW forming plan

Training update regarding the Joint RAC range and NEPA trainings in Buena Vista

Jeff; very helpful, different and updated from last time

Clare: a lot of information, but it was all attainable.

Dave: Nepa training very good. Good scenarios

Jamie: evaluations on NEPA were good. A few people thought it was too much, others thought too simplistic.

Clare: Range training great, NEPA training basic. Likes bringing all the RACs together

Dave Boyd; NTC says general training as scheduled not open to public RAC, but if they know specifically that the RAC wants/needs something.

Dave will e-mail list of possible training available to RAC.

Dave will e-mail wildlife group – available June 26 8 .a.m at the Meeker office? BLM will talk about BLM role in wtP dog, invite Dow as well. Wildlife population numbers. Impacts on wildlife from drought. Wildlife impacts on range as a result of drought. Any issues involving development on wildlife. Attch any resolutions on wildlife

Also planning review committee 8 a.mm 25 th conference call

Glenwood/Kremmling RMP

Joe Stout and Brian Hopkins give power point updating close of scoping, work done so far

Larry: Why is not USFS cooperating agency

JOE: USFS never has for a BLM Colorado plan

Jamie: They will be actively involved, didn't want to be an official cooperator. Have participated so far

Jeff: Comments will have to be treated as public, not cooperating agency

Brian talks about community assessment process. Started before scoping. Asked communities where they are going with their planning. First time ever been done in BLM. Jump-started planning process, got cooperators interested. Fits right into format of planning handbook.

Qualitative information

Jeff: Very strong on recreation side. Is that what you expected?

Brian: It's big in these communities. Why a lot people move to this area

Joe: Conversation went where communities wanted to

Jamie: Western Garfield Co brought out more multiple use concerns. This is a place to start. Helps us do a better job developing draft alternatives

Jeff: Are cooperators participating in RFD?

Joe: Not so far. We've been working with them to see what aspects of the RMP they are interested in participating

Travel management meetings coming in June to allow public to review BLM inventory, offer input

Steve: Are you working with user groups?

Joe: We gave heads up at scoping. Been in contact with a lot of folks already

John M: Any on-the-ground work? Signs at trails, etc. Not everybody who uses land is reading newspapers, listening to radio

Joe: Trying to get word through word of mouth

John M: Need better way to contact these users – they aren't all part of organized groups

Larry: Maybe something like what county has to do: post information at the site of potential change

Jamie: We can post on bulletin boards at trailheads

Brian: will notify during user surveys as well

Clare: Recreational working group can help

Steve: Inventory for Bangs took a year a half, seems like this is aggressive

Joe: Already have done inventory, we're just asking the public to proof it at these meetings

Clare: Will inventory maps delineate designated routes already existing vs. those that are user created?

Joe: yes

Dave will e-mail Steve Joe's Powerpoint

Several members express appreciate for approach community assessment

John M: good job on inventory and travel management meetings

Jamie: keep idea of sub committee that would work with us on this. Be thinking of good people to have on subcommittee for PLAN

Catherine: What are big issues you anticipate?

Brian: recreation, oil and gas (high potential area in GSFO leased already), wildlife, visuals are huge in these communities

Jamie: In terms of oil and gas we did the 1999 EIS, and strong stipulations are in place. We can add COAs, BMPs through this planning revision. Plan talks about a lot of important issues besides oil and gas, and we want to make sure people understand that

White River update

Updating plan to address anticipated increase in oil and gas development. Taking a proactive approach to amend plan. Developing a new RFD.

Larry: Do abandoned wells apply towards count?

Jamie: AN RFD includes temp abandoned wells, not permanently abandoned

Kent: Hope to have RFD complete in a month.

Going to ask RAC to participate in planning effort.
Socioeconomic group can help determine analyze impacts that might not be possible to included in draft.

Air model group – working on three models. Stakeholders will develop protocol to address as many concerns as possible.

Reviews scoping report

How does RAC want to be involved?

Kent: Jeff had expressed concern about openness in WRFO amendment. BLM policy does not allow RFD to be shared until it is complete and accepted (final). To the extent possible, this process will be open.

Scoping report on-line

Larry: did you contact leaseholders in developing RFD?

Kent: sought input from every operator in field office. Industry is paying for this amendment effort, have been working closely with them.

Jamie: our predicted numbers matched with what industry predicted

Kent: probably will see a range of numbers with us

T Wright: Who is doing socioeconomic?

Kent: URS, our contractor

T Wright: Bureau requirements woefully lacking in socioeconomic. Take a good look at it, don't use standard cookie-cutter Bureau approach

Larry: Garfield county socioeconomic study

T Wright: surprised scoping report doesn't analyze impacts to agriculture near Meeker, direct or indirect

Kent: those impacts should be addressed in socioeconomic impact study

T wright: Your plan should address impacts to grazing and private lands, and the White River elk herd.

Kent: we are analyzing grazing, not housing. Don't know everything that will be analyzed at this point. There are limits to plan

T. Wright: Direct Nepa nexus to your permitting on private lands. You must address cumulative impacts. You must acknowledge

Kent: We will analyze cumulative effects

Catherine: Analyze impacts associated on private lands, but we don't make decisions about the private lands/associated growth

Jamie: It's important to point out that the scoping report only addresses comments we received from the public

Jon: My comments on scoping was specific to oil and gas. How can livestock operators interact with oil and gas development long-term? All activities interact.

Jamie: When we say 97 percent of area in Glenwood is leased, we are only talking about the area west of Hogback. It's about 97 percent of the area that has high potential for oil and gas, which is just a part of the Field Office lands.

Clare: I know it's hard to identify form letters – but 15,000 unique people did comment on scoping report. How is that handled?

Kent: It's handled as one comment. It's not a voting process.

Clare: Should be some way to address those numbers

Jeff: In reviewing the scoping document had comment, we wanted Moffat county's 5% threshold for disturbance to sagebrush be included (what is included in the LSFO RMP), and that air quality emissions should address oil and gas only.

Kent is looking for informal working group for WRFO, unless RAC feels differently

John M: feels that the right 15 members to help are not on the RAC and we should go out. Group agrees. Think same thing is needed for GSFO/KFO

Larry: Why do you need to do this if you already have 20 cooperators

Jamie: can get additional viewpoints that work through the RAC. Sub-Committee would report to RAC, not BLM. GSFO coop meetings are open to the public

Jeff: wants WRFO cooperator meetings open to public

T Wright: need to clearly delineate responsibilities. RAC needs to be able to move forward if subcommittee can't make decision/reach consensus

John M: Subcommittee good at completing specific tasks, not on entire plan

John H: Cooperators have authority to sit at table and help us however they can. Wherever they have expertise. Exempt from FACA. NWCOS wasn't appointed by us, we weren't asking for recommendations. Subcommittees go to the RAC with recommendations

Jamie: The sub group would put together ideas, would present this to the RAC

Public Comment

Luke Shaffer, CEC in Craig – Great to have high level of transparency in the plans that are currently underway. That has increased public knowledge of the process. I encourage you to post documents such as the AMS on-line

Jane Yazzee – Hard to follow conversation from where audience sits. From citizens point of view, having worked on NWCOS for four years and looking at the stage that GSFO/KFO and WRFO are in, I can't help but think that all federal agencies act like colonial days, occupying soldiers. You couldn't do anything about it. As commendable as the Community Assessment is, citizen's aren't able to handle occupying soldiers. You all deserve A+ for following NEPA. But you don't seem to know what to do with elephant in the room, the energy boom. You proceed with your reports and don't break ranks. Most lands are already leased. Act as if we are helpless and there is nothing we can do.

Truly puzzling to me. There is not going to be a resource left or social health unless you meet the elephant and decide how to do it. This is just weird behavior. Community assessment doesn't get there. Our behavior is strange. These are our public lands. Blowing it on our public lands. Truly weird situation.

Steve: What would you like to see different?

Jane: Rediscuss what multiple use is. Let's look at the law about what we can do. Not easy answers, but not impossible either.

Managing for Excellence Committee: John M chairs, Kathy, T Wright, Larry , Clare, Pat

T Wright: recommends that we write a letter to Sally saying RAC wants to be more involved

Passed

Next meeting

August – Stewardship contracting (field trip?); vince matthews (lunch presentations)

Nov – John Harpole, pipelines and gas economics; Joshua Eldrige, CSU/Williams reclamation study

Larry wants air quality item

Formation of WRFO RMPA sub-committee

Formation GSFO subcommittee

Cooperative sagebrush initiative one hour – T Wright

Cut time for FM update

Emerald mountain event