



U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

Northwest Resource Advisory Council (RAC) Meeting Minutes

October 5, 2023

Location: Meeker, CO

RAC Members

Name	Location	Cat.	Interest Represented
Shawn Brennan	Glenwood Springs	I	Energy & Minerals
Shannon Chollett (absent)	Rifle	I	Energy & Minerals
Jeff Comstock	Craig	I	Rights-of-Way Interests
Kirk Daehling	Battlement Mesa	I	Energy & Minerals
Scott Robertson	Rangely	I	Federal Grazing
Carl Conner	Grand Junction	II	Archaeological & Historical Interests
Roy Karo	Grand Junction	II	Dispersed Recreation
Scott Braden	Grand Junction	III	Public-at-Large
Tom Jankovsky	Glenwood Springs	III	Elected Official
John Justman	Fruita	III	Public-at-Large
Kris Middledorf (call in)	Steamboat Springs	III	Colorado Parks and Wildlife
Katie Steele	Grand Junction	III	Public-at-Large
Hattie Johnson	Carbondale	II	Dispersed Recreation
Beatriz Soto Ruvalcaba	Glenwood Springs	II	Environmental Organizations
Anthony Vagneur	Woody Creek	II	Dispersed Recreation

Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Staff

Name	Title	Office
Elijah Waters	District Manager	Northwest District Office
Greg Larson	District Manager	Upper Colorado River District
Erin Jones	Associate District Manager	Upper Colorado River District
James Michels	Associate District Manager	Northwest District Office
Stephen Leonard	Field Manager	Kremmling Field Office
Kymm Gresset	Field Manager	Little Snake Field Office
Bill Mills	Field Manager	White River Field Office
Greg Wolfgang	Field Manager	Grand Junction Field Office
Larry Sandoval	Field Manager	Colorado River Valley Field Office
Lathan Johnson	Fire Management Specialist	Upper Colorado River Interagency Fire Management Unit

Landon Smith	Fire Management Specialist	Northwest Colorado Interagency Fire Management Unit
John Monkouski	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Kremmling Field Office

Congressional Staff Attendees

Name	Office
Hilary Henry (call in)	Senator Michael Bennet
McKenna Farley	Representative Lauren Boebert

Public Attendees

Name	Office
None present	

Meeting Minutes

Agenda Item: House Keeping, Introductions, and Opening Remarks

Facilitators: Elijah Waters, Greg Larson

Elijah Waters took over duties as the Designated Federal Officer and welcomed RAC attendees, facilitated introductions, provided an overview of the agenda, and discussed logistics and “housekeeping” items for the day. A quorum was present. Scott Braden was nominated and elected as the Chair. Katie Steele was elected as Vice-Chair.

Agenda Item: Review and Discuss the Natural Soda and Hunt Fire and Field Trip

Facilitator: Elijah Waters

Elijah Waters and RAC members noted the high points of the Natural Soda facilities visit and Hunt Fire field trip.

Agenda Item: Fire Management Presentation and Discussion “*Fuels treatments, opportunities and challenges*”

Facilitators: Landon Smith and Lathan Johnson

Smith and Johnson presented an overview of Federal Fire Policy including fire management, risk management, fire science, working with other partners and planned versus unplanned fire. There was a discussion of fire in sage grouse habitat and controlled burns in sage grouse habitat. It was suggested to invite Kathy Griffin with Colorado Parks and Wildlife to further discuss at a future RAC meeting. The discussion also to provide RAC input on sage grouse EIS draft.

Agenda Item: Upper Colorado River Special Recreation Management Area - Business Plan

Facilitators: John Monkouski, Stephen Leonard

John Monkouski summarized his June 2023 presentation from last NW RAC meeting, addressed fee changes to the plan based on RAC input from the June 2023 meeting, and answered questions before the motion to pass the Upper Colorado River Special Recreation Management Area Business Plan was unanimously approved.

Agenda Item: Field Manager Updates

Facilitator: Steve Leonard, Kremmling Field Office Field Manager; Kymm Gresset, Little Snake Field Office Field Manager; Bill Mills, White River Field Office Field Manager; Greg Wolfgang, Grand Junction Field Office Field Manager; Larry Sandoval, Colorado River Valley Field Office Field Manager

Field Management and the RAC discussed current events in the field across the spectrum of land management programs. Success stories included restoration projects, wild horse management, business plan updates, facility improvements and collaborative efforts across the Northwest region. For the complete report, see Attachment 1: Northwest Resource Advisory Council Field Manager Updates, October 2023.

Agenda Item: Public Comment

Facilitator: Elijah Waters

There were no public comments at this RAC Meeting. Comments were received during this time from Hilary Henry of Senator Michael Bennet's Office. Henry said the Senator Bennet's office appreciates BLM engagement with his office and that Senator Bennet recently visited the Thompson Divide, Crested Butte and the Mid-Continent quarry site. Henry added that Senator Bennet is working on oil and gas bonding reform and is concerned about orphan wells. Henry said Senator Bennet has heard from wildland firefighters on wage issues and is in support of a permanent increase.

Agenda Item: Open Discussion

Tom Jankovsky commented on the previous wild horse resolution. It was suggested to create a common share location for the RAC to access previous resolutions, the website was suggested as the best location. John Justman suggested looking into a campaign to encourage better treatment of public lands and it was mentioned that a retired BLM employee is working on a no dumping campaign in the UCR. It was suggested to consider a combined NW and SW RAC to discuss the Dominquez-Escalante NCA.

Agenda Item: Closing Remarks

Facilitator: Elijah Waters

Elijah Waters thanked the group for their attendance and participation as a quorum was present. Waters and the RAC discussed possible future agenda items to include bringing in someone from Moab, UT to discuss recreation, a discussion on cheatgrass herbicide, fire ecology with Kathy Griffin, illegal dumping campaigns. Tours ideas included mitigation fund sites, the Blue Valley land exchange, American Gypsum, a bio-fuels plant tour and the North Park restoration projects.

The Chair thanked the White River Field Office for hosting and outgoing members for their service.

Agenda Item: Adjourn

Facilitator: Elijah Waters

Meeting adjourned by Elijah Waters, Designated Federal Officer.