

Tri Resource Advisory Council meeting

SFNWGB RAC

Breakout session

April 6, 2017

Minutes taken by Terah Malsam

**Introductions – Mark Freese, Chair**

- RAC members present: Willie Molini, Mark Freese, David Von Seggern, John Ugalde, Ron Cerri, Greg Hendricks, Matt Gingerich, Ron Keil.
- BLM representatives present: Ralph Thomas (CCD DM), Lisa Ross (CCD PAO), Michael Toombs (WD DM), Terah Malsam (WD PAO).

**RAC Business**

- Lisa: Explains new quorum policy
- Open discussion: Filling pods, categories, outreach to tribes to fill that position on the RAC.
- Vote on adopting new quorum policy:
  - 1st Willie
  - 2nd John
  - All in favor
- Approval of minutes
  - August: 1st John, 2nd Ron
  - January: both sets approved

**BLM website survey – information in packets – Lisa**

- How to find specific pages.
- Recreation.gov
- Gather pages
- High-level rather than district/local level
- *Discussion:*
  - Mark: how should we move forward? Simply fill out the survey?
  - Ralph: draft a letter after....., check out the site, find the issues you have with it, develop an opinion.
  - Lisa: will resend survey.
  - Ron: found Word docs on the RAC webpage, mixed with PDF.
  - Lisa: Surveys back within the next couple of weeks.

**Subgroup Reports**

NCA Subgroup – Willi Molini

- Next meeting May 12, 1:30-4 at NSO

- Agenda:
  - NCA manager report
  - Future, need for charter, info on lithium claims, water developments, proposed land bill, Pershing Co.
  - Public comment period.
- *Discussion:*
- Ralph: The subgroup is not an autonomous group, a part of the parent group. It's not defined in legislation.
- Willie: There is confusion on the purpose, duration of the group.
- Terah: Two public comment periods? Will check on times in the FRN.
- Willie: We do need to determine
- Ralph: Black Rock RMP, scan and send to group. Is this group going to be long term?
- Mike T: Thinks we need to keep the subgroup.
- David: Do the other NCAs in NV have subgroups? (no one knows)
- Mark: Thinks we need to provide guidance to NCA subgroup (BLM). Ralph and Mike plan on being there.
- Matt: Do we need to provide them some purpose?
- Mark: If we have ideas, we can share with them.

#### Grazing Subgroup – Ron Keil

- Meeting scheduled, but didn't meet the timeframe. Will meet today.
- Members on the Grazing subgroup: John, Pat H., Ron, did have Doug until he resigned. Need a new rep (hopefully from another RAC).
- Checklist is complete
- Worked with Mike Herder and Jake Vialpando for sample docs on best example of Range allotment NEPA doc. Sample permit was provided and he summarized and sent out to subgroup.
- There has been little engagement within group on this.
- Where the group might head is to propose the development of an annual operating plan for the permittee to be engaged in and that the BLM would lead.
- The monitoring responsibilities as well. They don't need to be incorporated into the NEPA doc. Some of it can be done by the permittees. Nice if it was documented in the AOP – cooperative monitoring.
- Employee turnover. Having the plan is more consistent. The permittee could hand over the plan to anyone who comes in, especially with cooperative monitoring.
- The next step is to engage the rest of the subgroup and see if they are interested in pursuing this.
- Other issues: development of template for allotment NEPA for consistency.
- Update Range land health guidelines, they are outdated. Will probably come up today with the subgroup meeting. Would possibly like to do a field trip within the subgroup. Looking at standards and guidelines, somewhere in central NV.
- Ralph: you can request a specialist to meet with the group. Kathryn Dyer, Jake Vialpando.
- Ron: The AOP seems to be the missing key to pull all the pieces together.

- Can we identify opportunities for programmatic level planning that could help gain proficiencies in the NEPA process?
- Ralph: Furtado approached him on a Water Hauling programmatic (Statewide).
- Goal is to have buy in from the permittees moving forward.

#### Sage grouse subgroup – Willie Molini

- Workshop, working groups
- BLM/FS put on workshops for permittees
- Holding pattern and monitoring the progress BLM is making.
- Always looking for opportunities to make recommendations to the BLM.
- Our RAC members on the group: Matt, Kyle, Debbie, David, John

#### WHB subgroup – Greg Hendricks

- The WHB Statewide subgroup is kicking off today.
- Went out to prison adoption in March. Spoke with all involved. Saw a significant drop in prices for horses.
- Very successful program overall, even the burro was adopted.
- All of their supplies are donated. Advocates are working on funds to help the prison programs
- Extreme Mustang Makeover will be at Reno Rodeo June 23, 24 & 25.
- Fish Springs – a lot of public input at last meeting. Meeting between State Director, CCDO DM, State WH&B Specialist (on temporary detail from Ely), Grazing Permittee, and local Fish Springs residents (Ralph will talk about his later)
- New drug is pending development and clinical testing in Australia. This would be a one-shot injectable drug that could potentially sterilize both mares and stallions. . This is in very early stages of development but according to the concept paper the drug may show promise to offer little to no impact on the horse natural animal behavior.
- Willie: We are in a crisis situation for the range land and the animals themselves.
- Greg: Example was in the Clear Creek area in Vegas . The land became nuked down there due to drought, excess horses way over AML and failure to reduce numbers in time. Once the gather took place, a few the horses had to be euthanized due to very poor condition.
- We are already seeing this condition with our springs. We may see some recovery this year. But it will return to the same conditions if drought returns.
- Ron K: is there enough demand for us to write a recommendation to the BLM about addressing this?
- Greg: The impact is widespread, Ranching is negatively affected because their AUMs are being cut. We don't see an action plan to stop the horse population growth. We need to stop the growth and then bring the numbers down.
- We have limited storage availability that is near capacity, and minimal budget earmarked for gathering and PZP application.
- John: it goes up 20% every year. With this year's crop, it could go up even more.
- Greg: minimal dedicated fertility control money and limited available horse storage and gather budget to do it. There is no interest from Congress to take on the subject, it's too contentious.

- Greg: National WH&B Committee mtg. in Elko, September 2016 – Proposed BLM should follow stipulations of WHB Act by offering all suitable animals in long and short term holding deemed unadoptable for sale without limitation or humane euthanasia. Those animals deemed unsuitable for sale should then be destroyed in the most humane manner possible. This was immediately rejected by the Bureau. What role can the RAC play? Congress must earmark funds to administer PZP to control continued population growth and bring down the excess horse numbers to more manageable AML counts.
- John Ugalde - The BLM needs better tools to control populations.

#### **Vote on new Vice Chairperson – Mark Freese**

- Mark nominates Greg Hendricks
- All in favor: Greg is new Vice Chairperson

#### **DM's Reports: (See DM Reports)**

##### **Carson City District – Ralph Thomas**

- No gathers planned
- Prescribed burning is done for the season
- Decision on Virginia Mountains Health project signed and appealed (Katie Fite WLD).
- CCD RMP, prepared and updated FRN package.
- Fire season could be a bad one with all the new veg growth.
- Fires from last season – Little Den Fire, Tule Fire and Virginia Mountain Complex, Horseshoe Fire
- Pine Nuts wild horse advocate group comments on EA will be considered and responded to in the EA.
- SNPLMA Acquisition – Bentley. Working on the acquisition plan right now.
- Legislative lands actions – Fernley. Have to pay appraised value on it. Storey Co. lands still waiting on WO on guidance on survey lines.
- Dixie Meadows EA will be complete soon and sent out for public review.
- Received a proposal for Salt Wells solar panel project.
- Permittee outreach – work with permittees on monitoring. Letter went out to permittees to set up meetings. Not many responses.
- Cultural – Hidden Cave tours starting.
- Recreation – Sand Mountain activities/events. OHV events, Rebelle Rally.

#### **Questions?**

- David – Fire suppression activities. Does BLM NV have a statewide plan on how it fights fires?
- Ralph: We do, will get it from Paul Peterson.

#### **\*(Break from DM reports)**

- Riparian letter – Bill from NE RAC
  - Wants to address the Riparian letter that they reviewed. As a whole, they are willing to sign on the letter, just have a few edits/additions to add. (Will meet at 1045).

##### **Winnemucca District – Mike Toombs**

- Staffing overview – (Vacancies) DM, FMO, BRFO FM, Range staff
- WD roads situation and work out there. Asking for public assistance on getting those roads inventoried.
- Hycroft Phase 2 expansion overview.
- Newmont Twin Creeks, Coeur Rochester projects. Marigold Mine cultural incursion.
- AML – cleaning up McDermitt Mine property.
- Cultural – Trego Comm. Site for railroad, working with UNR on depression-era mining site. Inventories in Soldier Meadows area.
- Native Nations Land Bill – three tribes on our District, Unionville Cemetery R&PP.
- NCA – 2017 AiR program.
- Wilderness – continuing inventory on LWC.
- Soldier Meadows working group working on Desert Dace protection/conservation.
- Sage grouse habitat improvement projects – fence marking projects
- WHB – Smoke Creek EA, hope to have out for pub comment by June 1, Owyhee gather overview.

Question: if we see Canadian thistle, who should we report to? Mike, send it to me and I'll pass along to the Weeds person.

- Fire staffing update, agreements with cooperators.
- Fuels treatment areas on District.
- Fire Mitigation and Education Activities – 16 events

----- End of SFNWGB RAC meeting -----