

**Bureau of Land Management – Arizona
Resource Advisory Council Meeting
June 4, 2015**

**BLM Arizona State Office
One North Central Avenue, Suite 800 Phoenix,
Arizona 85004**

RAC Members:

<u>Name</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>Interest Represented</u>	<u>Term Expires</u>	<u>Present</u>
Bill Brake*	Scottsdale	Grazing	11/2016	Y
Emmett Sturgill	Kingman	Grazing	11/2016	Y
Krishna Parameswaran	Scottsdale	Energy/Minerals	09/2017	Y
Thomas Hulen	Tempe	Commercial Recreation	09/2015	Y
Maggie Sacher	Marble Canyon	Commercial Recreation	09/2015	Y
Michael Quigley	Tucson	Non-Commodity/Environmental	11/2016	Y
H. Maaike (Mica) Schotborgh	Tucson	Non-Commodity/Environmental	11/2016	Y
David Tenney	Show Low	Non-Commodity/Dispersed Recreation	09/2017	N
Dawn Hubbs	Hackberry	Non-Commodity/Historical/ Archaeology	09/2017	N
Carl Taylor	Flagstaff	Non-Commodity/Historical/ Archaeology	09/2015	Y
H. Drew John	Safford	Local Area/Public-At-Large	11/2016	N
Mandy Metzger	Flagstaff	Local Area/Elected Official	09/2017	Y
Gary Watson	Kingman	Local Area/Elected Official	09/2017	N
Larry Howery	Tucson	Local Area/Academia	09/2015	Y
Jeffrey Sargent	Peoria	Local Area/Public-At-Large	09/2015	Y
Jim deVos (non-voting)	Phoenix	Arizona Game and Fish Department	n/a	Y

*RAC Chair

BLM Staff:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Office</u>	<u>Present</u>
Raymond Suazo	Arizona State Director	Arizona State Office	Y
Amber Cargile	Deputy State Director, Communications	Arizona State Office	Y
June Shoemaker	Acting Deputy State Director, Resources & Planning	Arizona State Office	Y
Rebecca Heick	Acting Deputy State Director, Lands & Minerals	Arizona State Office	Y
Tim Burke	District Manager	Arizona Strip District	Y
Roxie Trost	District Manager	Colorado River District	Y
Tim Shannon	District Manager	Gila District	Y
Patrick Putnam	Acting District Manager	Phoenix District	Y
Dorothea Boothe	RAC Coordinator	Arizona State Office	Y
Nicole Johnson	Recording Secretary	Arizona State Office	Y

Meeting Minutes

Agenda Item: Welcome

Presenter: Bill Brake, Resource Advisory Council (RAC) Chair

- The RAC meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m.
- Introductions – RAC Members, BLM Staff and Members of the public: Holly Taylor, Sharon Cuevas (USFS Staff Officer), Kitty Benzar (President of Western Slope No-Fee Coalition), Brian Benzar, Gerry Hillier (Executive Director of Quadstate Local Government Authority).

Agenda Item: State Director's Introduction and Update on BLM Programs and Issues**Presenter:** Raymond Suazo, BLM Arizona State Director/Designated Federal Official**Introduction:**

- Thanked the RAC for their time and commitment.
- Introduced Mandy Metzger who was appointed to the RAC last fall.
- Discussed the purpose of the RAC. Wants to continue to provide information to the RAC and get their feedback. Encouraged the RAC members to review the Charter (Handout) to make sure the Council is operating within the scope of its responsibility. Also encouraged the RAC members to bring topics to the RAC chair, who can elevate them to the State Director.
- Nominations and vetting for RAC are still underway. There were 14 solid nominations and re-nominations. Hoping that nominations are approved by September 2015.

Personnel Announcements:

- Vi Hillman, formerly the Tucson Field Office Manager, is now an analyst for the Business Support Services Division at the Arizona State Office.
- Melissa Warren from BLM Idaho is currently the acting Tucson Field Office Manager.
- Mary D'Aversa, the Phoenix District Manager is currently on a detail to the Washington Office and working on the Wild Horse and Burro Program. She has accepted a position as District Manager in Idaho Falls and will be closing out and leaving Arizona once her detail is complete.
- Patrick Putnam is the acting Phoenix District Manager.
- Pamela Mathis, who is currently the Administrative Officer at the Phoenix District, will be going to the Gila District Office as the Associate District Manager.

Hill Visit:

- The State Director and the Deputy State Director for Communications visited the Hill in May.
- The concept of the NM/AZ merger was a topic of discussion.
 - The members asked questions and wanted more information. There's a lot of concern from the Arizona delegation. They didn't understand what it would mean for their stakeholders. The budget has affected positions and the ability for BLM Arizona to serve the public. It was emphasized to the delegation that any merger would focus on becoming more efficient.

Program Updates:

- Rapid Ecoregional Assessment (REA) – Madrean REA; will be released the week of June 8.
- National Conservation Lands – 15th Anniversary Celebrations will be taking place throughout the year.
 - The Executive Leadership Team will be in California and will be visiting national conservation lands and taking part in some celebrations.
 - BLM Arizona will be posting the events on social media.
- Renewable Energy & Transmission
 - Restoration Energy Design Project (RDEP), with the help of the RAC, identified previously disturbed lands, proximity to load, water impacts, cultural, wildlife, ~~F~~and ~~T~~ & E impacts.
 - Analyzed public lands – RDEP resulted in Renewable Energy Design Areas (REDAs) – lands identified as suitable for renewable energy development.
 - Need to remind the public of that opportunity. BLM Arizona is going to focus on rebranding. Communications department created a pamphlet to focus on the rebrand; theme is that BLM Arizona is Renewable Ready.
 - Why important? We have a new Governor – when the Governor moves forward with energy policy, the BLM Arizona wants to be ready to engage in an active dialogue as to how the public lands can fit into his vision for renewable energy in Arizona.
 - Applications have gone down from 45 to a handful. BLM needs to find out what the need is and

- where the market is for energy development and Arizona's role in that.
- There has been a downward trend in energy production in the state. BLM Arizona has 3 projects ready to go, but no power purchase agreements.
 - Draft EIS was issued on the Southline Project in April 2015, currently analyzing public comments. Final EIS should be out in summer or fall 2015.
 - Secretary Jewell signed the Record of Decision for the SunZia Southwest Transmission Project in January 2015. SunZia is working through the states to get their permits.
 - Expecting an application later this summer to construct a high voltage transmission line between the Delaney substation in Arizona and the Colorado River substation in California.
 - 3 Solar Energy Zones – working thru Regional Mitigation Strategy – Recommend bringing topic back to RAC at a later meeting – to have discussion on where we are

Comments/Questions:

- Re: Renewable Energy Demand – Carl Taylor/Krishna Parameswaran
 - Observation that it's the utility companies that are driving renewable energy demand and not issuing power purchase agreements. Utilities have a huge investment and need help to transition to renewable energy. Policies need to be appropriate. Is BLM talking with utility companies or just the Governor's office?
 - § Director Suazo: The BLM has talked with utility companies in the past and will talk with them again. But we want to get a perspective on Arizona's plan for energy and the role of public lands in that plan, which is why we are having discussions with Governor's office.
- Re: BLM Arizona/New Mexico Merger - Bill Brake
 - The Arizona RAC has gotten inquiries about the merger and whether they would or would not support it.
 - On its own accord, without BLM staff present, the group voted and decided to write a letter to Department of the Interior Secretary Jewell voicing their opinion against the merger.
 - Michael Quigley drafted the letter and read it (Attachment 1). The letter was brought up in the meeting so that the State Director was not surprised by it later.
 - § Director Suazo noted that he did not request the letter. He also noted that, if the merger continued to move forward, he may come back to the RAC for official input as part of stakeholder outreach, but that he was not asking for that at this time.

Action Items	Person Responsible
Hand out RETA pamphlets to RAC members	DSD Communications
Add Regional Mitigation Strategy to agenda at later RAC meeting	RAC Coordinator

Agenda Item: BLM Arizona Healthy Lands Restoration Focal Areas
(RAC Recommendations to BLM State Director on Healthy Lands Focal Areas)

Presenter: Bill Brake, RAC Chair

Background:

- Director Suazo brought the topic to the RAC. They were given a proposal and were asked for their input.
- The topic was discussed during the working group meeting held on June 3, 2015. Suggestions were compiled and presented to the State Director.

Attachment 2: RAC Working Group Recommendations to the BLM State Director Restore Arizona/Healthy Lands Focal Areas

Recommendations/Clarification:

- Communication & Development of the Business Plan/Fundraising

- The RAC felt they were given a great proposal; however it was felt that a business plan in conjunction with the proposal could be given to successful bidder.
- Regarding fundraising – The RAC concluded that the proposal is a great endeavor, assuming there is funding for it. A business plan would make it easier for the RAC to present the proposal to the entities they represent and sub sequentially their constituents; which would aid in receiving additional funding.
- Mica Schotborgh has agreed to be a liaison with the BLM on developing a business plan.
- The RAC wants BLM to consider the business plan and will work with BLM to get it done and funded so that it can be used as a resource to make a better plan.
- Review the Draft Agreement
- RAC to Recommend a Business Plan with an Outside Facilitator
 - Having the proposal looked at by someone outside of the BLM.

Discussion:

- Krishna Parameswaran commented on the importance of communication and the value of the RAC representing various constituencies. He suggested a talking piece to start that effort. Communication is about building the partnerships that will ultimately provide the funding.
- Carl Taylor commented that the proposal is very elaborate but there were parts that were confusing and problematic. He felt that parts seemed to be very detailed & other parts required a lot of work from the other party.
- Bill Brake mentioned that the RAC wants to get involved. He offered taking what has been suggested and meeting with Mica Schotborgh and June Shoemaker to define what role that could be before the next RAC meeting.
- Director Suazo said that he liked the idea of communicating what we're doing. New Mexico did it with Restore New Mexico and it helps bring partners to the table. If there are private dollars invested, then we're more likely to have the funding matched by the government. He's interested in business plan and assigning Mica as a liaison is a good approach. He agreed with having a meeting with June Shoemaker to take a look at what's been presented and see what's possible legally.
- Maggie Sacher pointed out items that were on the board but didn't get put under the funding sources.

Action Items	Person Responsible
Set up meeting Bill Brake, Mica Schotborgh & June Shoemaker before next RAC meeting	Acting DSD, Resources & Planning
Add the following under Funding Sources on the Working Group Suggestion document: BLM Affiliated Friends Groups, HPAC Heritage Dollars, Tribal Entities	RAC Coordinator

Agenda Item: Next Meeting Dates

Presenter: Bill Brake, RAC Chair

- The meeting was running 10 minutes ahead of schedule so discussing the next RAC meeting date was moved up on the agenda.

Discussion/Consensus:

- Next RAC meeting to be held late August or the first week of September so that the meeting is held before the end of the fiscal year and federal books close out; 2 day meeting.
- RAC will meet to finish up any BLM projects before RAC members' terms end in September.
- If the Forest Service needs the Recreation RAC to review specific recreation fee proposals this fall/winter, a standalone meeting will be scheduled.
- June Shoemaker reminded the RAC that the Paria Canyon-Coyote Buttes Draft Business Plan fee increase was moved to the next RAC meeting, which will be a time consuming project. Maggie Sacher mentioned

that the Rec RAC has already been working on it.

Action Items	Person Responsible
Check the State Director's calendar and send out possible meeting dates ASAP.	RAC Coordinator

Agenda Item: Recreation Resource Advisory Council (RRAC) Session

Presenter: Maggie Sacher, Recreation and Committees Work Group/RRAC Chair

Mr. Brake adjourned the regular RAC and Ms. Sacher called to order the RRAC.

USFS Introductions:

- Francisco Valenzuela, USFS Director, Recreation, Heritage and Wilderness Resources; Al Remley, Washington Office National Fee Coordinator; Greg Schuster, Forest Recreation Planner; Neil Bosworth, Tonto Forest Supervisor; Rebecca Hoffman, Public Services Staff Officer, Tonto National Forest

Agenda Item: Tonto National Forest Recreation Fee Program

Presenter: Rebecca Hoffman, Public Services Staff Officer, Tonto National Forest

Background:

- The Tonto National Forest is a big, busy, urban national forest near Phoenix. The recreation program is especially complex. The Forest is 3 million acres. It's the largest forest in Arizona and the 5th largest in the nation; and it's the 3rd busiest Forest in the nation if you don't count forests with ski slopes.
- There are approximately 4.8 million visitors per year.
- The presentation was to discuss the fee proposal for 215 developed recreation sites on the Forest. Currently only 71 developed sites charge fees.
- The money that the Forest collects and receives is used for the whole Forest, including undeveloped and withdrawn areas. However, more than 80 percent goes to the daily maintenance of the developed sites.
- That leaves a \$1.3 million gap. The fee proposal is designed to close the gap, instead of closing sites.

Tonto National Forest Fee Proposal: Presentation to Arizona Resource Advisory Council, June 3-4, 2015

- Part II: Fee machine clarification:
 - People will still be able to purchase Tonto passes through vendors, but the fee machines will allow people the convenience of not having to drive back into town if they forget to purchase a pass or want to stay an extra day, etc.
 - The fee machines will be a credit card machine connected to the Cloud. The higher cost of the Tonto pass via the machine would be for the fee for the machines and/or the contract associated with them.
- Public Outreach and Comments elaborated on
 - Overwhelming 95 percent of 300 visitor/376 written comments – didn't want reduced services, to go to concessionaires, or to work with partnerships
 - ASU fee attitude survey – The survey found that the public felt that the increase in fees was acceptable in order to keep services and amenities.
 - Conducted studies for 1 year prior to developing Fee Proposal. Once Fee Proposal was developed there was more public outreach. Information was disseminated in English and Spanish.
- How we addressed comments
 - Fees are higher at sites that have showers, water treatment, etc.
 - The fees will be raised per year and the sites will hopefully cover most costs associated with sites by 2018. Allocations and partnerships will cover other costs.
- Accountability and additional public outreach

- A yearly accomplishment report is already done to show accomplishments done within the Forest with the fees. This will continue to be done.
- Website will show projects and upgrades that were done.
- Press releases and blog communicate improvements and items being worked on.
- Continuing outreach and education. Making it clear to the public where the fees are going and what the increase was for.

Agenda Item: RRAC Public Comment Period

Ms. Sacher addressed the public and told them that the RRAC met for 2.5 hours on June 3, 2015, to discuss the Tonto National Forest Service Fee Proposal.

Public Comments:

- Fred Dows:
 - He and his wife (Suzi Dows) have been researching National Forest campgrounds for 21 years. They have written and published 12 books on camping in National Forests. They personally visit the campgrounds. They've worked with the Tonto National Forest staff and have provided them with data from their database. They agree with the fee increase and the need for it.
 - They would also push for transparency – a 1-2 page statement that specifically addresses recreation (what fees were taken in, what the money was spent on, what needs to be done and how much it's going to cost, etc.).
 - Many states don't have a RAC, but need them and need to increase fees.
- Suzi Dows:
 - The Tonto National Forest has done a good job at outreach and has public participation.
 - Hope the RAC can set an example to establish guidelines for other RACs so that they know how much public participation is required to get the increased funding that they need.
- Kitty Benzar:
 - Not opposed to fees on developed campgrounds.
 - Tonto has the pass as an entrance fee that was established by fee demo. FLREA replaced that. Under FLREA implemented 4 categories of recreation fees that could be charged.
 - § 1. Entrance fee – is not allowed; so Tonto Pass should not exist anymore.
 - § 2. Standard amenity fee site – for developed sites with picnic tables, etc.
 - § 3. Expanded amenity fees – for developed sites with boat launches, showers, etc.
 - People pay \$6 a day for these sites and can stay for up to 6 months. Fully supports a fee increase for these sites.
 - § 4. Special recreation permit fee to use non-developed/disbursed. –Ms. Benzar expressed her disagreement with these fees. She didn't feel there should be a fee to stand on the shoreline or put a kayak in the water. She doesn't feel that these activities should be considered special use and therefore require a permit.
 - Ms. Benzar doesn't like the automated fee machine proposal. The Government Accounting Office audit shut it down in the past. So, how is the fee machine different? She does not support charging a higher fee for the automated machines. Why not fee tubes?
 - Also, how much is vendor percentage for selling the pass?
 - And doesn't understand the \$80 Tonto Pass compared to the Interagency Pass.
 - Ms. Benzar sent a letter to the Tonto National Forest dated October 24, 2014, discussing the items of the fee proposal. Neil Bosworth replied on May 26, 2015.

Al Remley addressed some of Ms. Benzar's concerns:

- The Interagency Pass allows entrance to standard amenity sites. The Tonto Pass includes water craft pass as well.

- The special recreation permit is for people who are using specialized and sensitive areas. They aren't just throwing in a fishing line. They're using recreational vehicles and other motorized vehicles off-road, in roadless areas to be on these sensitive shorelines.
- The fee machines are for visitor convenience to pay onsite. They'll be chip and pin compliant. The whole Forest has to convert to chip and pin by October. It's more secure and easier to maintain. They're not cash based.
- Tonto daily pass is available at many sites and is still good at many sites. It won't be valid anymore at camp grounds. The Tonto Pass is for the heavy recreation users on the Tonto National Forest.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD CLOSED

Agenda Item:

RAC Recommendations to USFS Supervisor on Tonto National Forest Recreation Fee Program Proposal

MOTION	Motion made by	Second
To accept the proposal as it was given to the RAC with the amended changes.	Bill Brake	Carl Taylor
Unanimously Approved.		

- Motion means that the RAC will put forth the recommendation to the BLM Arizona State Director that the RAC approves the Tonto's fee proposal with the amendments that were provided on June 4, 2015.

Action Items	Person Responsible
The RRAC Chair will submit the recommendation through the RAC Chair, who will submit it to the State Director. The State Director will write a memo to the Regional Forester transmitting the RAC recommendation.	RRAC Chair initiates

- Maggie Sacher addressed the public and told them that during the working group meeting on June 3, 2015, the RRAC did make more suggestions to the Forest Service that were not in the original proposal. One of those things was for the Forest Service to be more transparent and provide information to the public on what the fees are, how much is collected, and where the money is being spent. They also asked the Forest Service to do more outreach.
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Agenda Item: Adjourn Recreation Resource Advisory Council Session / LUNCH

MEETING CALLED BACK TO ORDER AT 12:35 p.m.

The RAC Coordinator provided the RAC Chairman with the dates the State Director was available for the next RAC meeting. The proposed dates were: September 15-16 or September 16-17.

Agenda Item: West-Wide Energy Corridor Update (Information)

Presenter: Steve Fusilier, BLM Washington Office Branch Manager, Rights-of-Way

Background:

- There was a lawsuit related to the West-Wide Energy Corridor. As part of the settlement agreement, BLM was required to do public outreach.
- BLM is performing regional reviews to fine tune the 5,000 miles of BLM and 1,000 miles of Forest Service energy corridors that were designated in 2009. The idea is to see if they need to be changed, added, or removed.

- As part of the settlement agreement and the outreach requirement – BLM wants the RAC to understand what corridors are and their purpose. The BLM wants the RAC’s opinion and input on how to reach the public.

Comments/Questions:

- Jeff Sargent: How important is the scenic quality factor? Fusilier’s response: In some areas it can be very important. One of the gaps is the visual inventories in some areas. The hope is that the regional review will help to fill in the gaps.
- Jim deVos: Doesn’t it seem logical to concentrate impacts and have the corridors run parallel to roads like I-8 and I-10. Fusilier’s response: To some degree that’s what we try to do. The problem with I-8 is that there’s very little public land that runs alongside it. When you can consolidate roads and transmission lines, it makes sense because you’re limiting the impacts. You’re also making it easier for them to get to the areas for construction. They don’t have to create new roads cross country to get to the construction site.
- Mandy Metzger: Assumption is that better maps will be provided when presenting to the public? But thought that Department of Homeland Security didn’t want the corridors identified on maps due to terrorist attacks. Fusilier’s response: Anyone can look out and see where a pipeline or transmission line is. What we don’t make public is the detailed GIS information on the exact locations.
- Maggie Sacher: In Arizona are there habitat or wildlife interface concerns in the corridors and has Game and Fish weighed in yet? Should have their advisory council weigh in. Fusilier’s response: There are wildlife issues on some of them. Been trying to meet with Larry Voyles (Director of Arizona Game and Fish).
- Jim deVos: There’s no perfect place for hundreds of miles of corridors. You’ll always have wildlife, cultural, etc. concerns. Fusilier’s response: Having robust IOPs can help with addressing these issues.
 - deVos: One of the tools that are available now is the Western Crucial Habitat Assessment Tool (CHAT); it’s a seamless west wide wildlife values map. It’s very valuable to see hot spots and to use during planning.
- Bill Brake: It would be helpful to know what having a corridor means to the people who use the public lands. How do you manage around it? Is the corridor fenced off? How will it affect ranchers, etc.? A: Goes back to the original problem. People knew there were corridors, but didn’t know what it meant.
 - Brake: Do we give you names of partners to work with? And will you provide us with more complete plan? Fusilier’s response: That’s what we’re trying to get here is a list of organizations, etc. to talk to and get input from.
- Mica Schotborgh: Virtual corridor. If have to go thru NEPA then contact people who are involved in NEPA and they do their own outreach. Fusilier’s response: We aren’t doing NEPA. This is just a review. We’re gathering information to give the states input on where to put corridors.
- Mandy Metzger: If it’s part of a settlement, how do you know when you’ve fulfilled your public outreach obligation? Fusilier’s response: It’s up to our discretion. Our funding will determine how robust our outreach is.
- Steve Fusilier: Need to know issues so can design and mitigate around it. Things like whether an area will be fenced or not are project specific; however, it would be good to know if fencing an area would cause a problem, etc. We’ll be meeting with the public, showing them where the corridors are located and asking them if they have any concerns or recommendations based on how they use the land.

Action Items	Person Responsible
Provide slide show presentation to RAC.	Steve Fusilier
Provide a list of contacts/thoughts/ideas about the West-Wide Corridor.	RAC members will email lists to RAC Coordinator who will get them to Acting DSD Lands & Minerals, who will get them to Washington.

Agenda Item: RAC Committee Reports (Information)

Presenter: Bill Brake, RAC Chair

Archaeological/Historic – Thom Hulén

- Nothing to report

Rangeland Health/Grazing – Bill Brake

- Constantly having a problem with getting NEPA done. It's having an impact on people being able to get loans and operating permits on BLM land. Some banks won't loan money if you don't have permits.
 - Director Suazo has elevated the permit issue and brought it to the attention of Washington. Less money equals less range staff and longer processing times for permits, etc.
- As a community, they're going to get training on how to handle the desert tortoise.
- Discussion about NRCS and partner funding.
- Jim deVos expressed kudos to June Shoemaker for the work Tim Hughes has done on the Candidate Conservation Agreement.
 - Director Suazo has asked Tim to come in and give him a briefing on species related issues. He may ask Tim to do a presentation for the RAC sometime.

Wild Horse & Burro – Larry Howery

- Updated the working group on what's happened since submitting the letter to Director Suazo in 2013 regarding the RACs concern about wild horses and burros. Specifically about standards and guidelines regarding rangeland health.
- Burros are more of a concern in Arizona. They get on the highways and cause accidents.
- The group decided that it's time to write another letter to Director Suazo. They will keep it brief and refer to the 2013 letter, giving updates on what's been happening from a federal and Arizona viewpoint.
 - Mica Schotborgh pointed out it has been brought up in every RAC meeting that she's been to that burros cause safety issues. She suggested adding that to the updated letter since it wasn't emphasized in the 2013 letter.

Director Suazo's response:

- The 2013 letter went up the chain of command to the BLM Director. He made a follow-up call to the Director at the time and discussed the RACs concerns and went over the letter.
- There was a burro gather in 2012 in the Colorado River District to try and address the safety issue. 350 burros were gathered.
- We're looking at some emergency gathers.
- Mary D'Aversa (Phoenix District Manager) is in WO on a detail as the acting Group Manager for Wild Horses and Burros. We're also brainstorming ideas to address issues here in Arizona.

June Shoemaker's response:

- BLM Arizona is participating in a group (ADOT, AZGFD, City of Peoria, Maricopa Co. Sheriff's Office) – There's lots of other information; and we're, getting data from other agencies. There's been conversation about how they move, where we can put up fences.
- Working on putting a standard operating procedure in place to get burros ready for adoption at the Florence holding facility instead of transporting them to the Axtell facility in Utah.
- Currently, there's a lack of adoptable burros nationally. If we are able to stand up a "prep" operation at the Florence facility BLM Arizona could gather and then put burros right into the adoption pipeline.
- Burros don't go to long term holding.

Maggie Sacher asked if BLM could put up billboards or have websites related to burros and safety.

- BLM Arizona has done public service announcements. The public service announcements ask people not feed the burros.
- Billboards have to be approved at a National level.

MOTION	Motion made by	Second
To allow Larry Howery to write a letter on behalf of the RAC to the State Director regarding the burro issues.	Maggie Sacher	Emmett Sturgill

Unanimously Approved.		
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Discussion about a letter to the RAC about the Wild Horse and Burro Program from the American Wild Horse Preservation Campaign (AWHPC).

Carl Taylor suggested replying to the letter by thanking them for their letter and telling them that the RAC has already taken a position. Attach a copy of the letters sent to the State Director.

MOTION	Motion made by	Second
Write a letter acknowledging AWHPC's letter and stating the RAC's position.	Maggie Sacher	Mica Schotborgh
Unanimously Approved.		

Action Items	Person Responsible
Draft response letter and send out for RAC review and approval.	Bill Brake and June Shoemaker

Recreation & Communities – Maggie Sacher

- Scott Jones came in and gave a presentation on the update of the step down plan. The draft is ready and up for public comment.
- Prior to September, we will be making an official request to get on the next agenda; provided Director Suazo approves of where they're at.

Agenda Item: Public Comment Period

No public comments.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD CLOSED

Agenda Item: RAC Committee Reports (Information) - continued

Presenter: Bill Brake, RAC Chair

Energy & Minerals – Krishna Parameswaran

- Supporting the concerns regarding the NEPA process.
- Want to understand current reclamation practices at mines compared to what may have happened in the past, which might have resulted in environmental problems.
- Examples:
 - Why can't you back fill hard rock, open pit mines?
 - Forest Service allows mines to stay open because they "may be" used in the future.
 - § What are the trigger points on a mine that is not active?
 - How long is NEPA good on those projects?
 - Mining claim basics would be good too.
 - Arizona Mining Association does a report on Economic Value

Director Suazo recommended having BLM staff give a presentation on the BLM process and provide examples of reclamation.

Action Items	Person Responsible
Get a copy of and bring to next RAC meeting the Arizona Mining Association report on Economic Impact for 2013.	Krishna Parameswaran
Ask Jeff Garrett, Larry Hobbs, Fred Conrath to give presentation at the next	RAC Coordinator will work with

RAC meeting on Mining 101 (establishing claims, reclamation process, etc.).	DSD Lands & Minerals.
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Water & Healthy Landscapes – Michael Quigley

- Nothing to report.

Agenda Item: RAC Questions on BLM District Reports (Q&As and Discussion)

Presenter: RAC Members, State Director, District Managers, BLM Staff

Tim Burke, District Manager, Arizona Strip:

- Really focused on employee and public safety on the Strip.
- Proposed Grand Canyon Watershed National Monument
 - BLM doesn't have a position on it, but employees are asked by the public about it all the time.
 - Uranium mining is the primary concern.
 - Funding for 15-year study. The study will provide guidance on either continuing withdrawal or how sustainable mining can continue.
- Working to fill position for the Grand Canyon -Parashant National Monument Manager.
- Planning on moving on with Paria-Coyote Buttes business plan – adjusting fees; hoping to get on agenda for the next RAC meeting. Adjust lottery system for the Wave. Want to get proposal out in the next few weeks.
- Healthy Lands Restoration System Strategy
 - Working in Uinkaret project area.
 - Have proposal for restoration activity in a 130,000 acre planning area.
 - Sat down with cooperators and laid out 20-25 separate projects; mainly treating juniper & sagebrush encroachment.
- Lots of rain and so lots of fuel grown on the AZ Strip. Could have a delayed monsoon season this year. We could have a late start to the fire season – potential for big fire season.

Roxy Trost, District Manager, Colorado River:

- Chief Ranger retired – Jonathan Azar was selected as the new Chief Ranger for CRD
- Background of RAC and their assistance in Kingman for new members.

Tim Shannon, District Manager, Gila:

- San Pedro Border Road – Low water crossing – there was driving through a cultural site. Able to put in a temporary solution that gives the Border Patrol the access they need but protects cultural resources.
- Melissa Warren is acting Field Manager in Tucson through September.
- Moving forward with the Ray Land Exchange. Going to have 4 public meetings to address concerns that were on the Resource Management Plan (RMP) and amendments.
- San Pedro RMP. Have started presenting alternatives.
 - Wants to make a presentation to the RAC on the RMP.
- Navajo County Grassland Restoration Project. Have had a veteran crew working on that.
- Jackson Hotshots – Jackson Mississippi Hotshot crew is at Ft. Huachuca – we have cooperative agreement; they were doing some work and are now on a fire near Douglas

Action Items	Person Responsible
Add to agenda at later RAC meeting – San Pedro RMP presentation	RAC Coordinator

Patrick Putnam, Acting District Manager, Phoenix:

- Personnel Updates:
 - Mary D'Aversa is on a detail so Patrick Putnam is acting
 - Dave Scarborough is the acting Lower Sonoran Field Manager while Ed Kender is on detail.
 - Ron Tipton is acting for Dave Scarborough as the Sonoran Desert National Monument Manager.
 - Hired Adam Eggers for the Public Affairs Officer position.
 - Acting as the Associate District Manager through mid-July is Patricia LaFramboise.

- Hired a Youth Coordinator (term position); Lawrence Harper.
- Youth Program:
 - Graduated the 8th class of Field School – 16 week program.
 - Students get all the training to get red-carded (without actually getting their red card).
 - Typically train inner city kids who have never been camping, etc.
 - Thus far, there's been 42 graduates/2 in associates/1 at NAU getting a BS.

Director Suazo encouraged Mr. Putnam to work with the DSD of Communications to get the story out about the Youth Program.

Hassayampa Field Office:

- Application came in Skull Valley area to mine tailings on a 2.6 acre mine that has been inactive for 30 years. Residents don't want. Going to do an Environmental Assessment; scoping in June.
- Wet/dry mapping volunteer project

Lower Sonoran Field Office (LSFO):

- Application for land sale from Gila River Indian community.
 - Biggest proposed land sale in Arizona – 3,336 acres
 - Accepted the application, reviewed it at the District level and made the recommendation to move it forward to the Land Tenure Steering Committee.
 - The State Director has the proposal for signature. Waiting to meet with the Gila River Indian community to describe the process with them. The land sale has not been approved; this is just starting the process.

June Shoemaker mentioned that there is active litigation for the LSFO regarding recreational shooting & grazing. Will keep the RAC informed as it proceeds.

Agenda Item: Wrap Up/Future Agenda Items/Next Meeting Dates/Adjourn

Presenter: RAC Members and BLM Staff

Director Suazo thanked RAC members.

Maggie Sacher mentioned that this was the first time that Game and Fish has been at the Working Group Meeting. She felt that it was invaluable to have them at the meeting.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 3:55 p.m.