

**Resource Advisory Council (RAC)**  
***Minutes***

**February 26, 2015**

**Bureau of Land Management  
Arizona State Office  
One North Central Avenue, Suite 800  
Phoenix, Arizona 85004**

**AGENDA ITEM: Welcome and Introductions:** Bill Brake, RAC Chair, RAC Members, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Staff, and guests.

The meeting was called to order at 8:45 a.m. by RAC Chair Bill Brake. Brake welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending. He said the working groups had a successful meeting on February 25.

Following the call to order and welcome, Brake asked the RAC members to introduce themselves and the areas they represent. Members of the audience were also asked to introduce themselves and state their affiliation.

**RAC Members in Attendance:**

**Category 1 – Commercial/Commodity Interests**

Bill Brake  
Maggie Sacher  
Emmett Sturgill  
Thomas Hulen  
Krishna Parameswaran

**Category 2 – Environmental, Dispersed Recreation, Archaeological/Historic, Wild Horse & Burro Interests**

Carl Taylor  
H. Maaiké (Mica) Schotborgh  
Michael Quigley

**Category 3 – Elected Officials, Native American, Public at Large, Academia, Local Government Officials**

Dawn Duncan-Hubbs  
Larry Howery  
Gary Watson

Marianne Cox (Arizona Game and Fish Department), Arizona Governor's Representative (Representing Jim deVos)

**ABSENT:** Jim deVos, Jeffrey Sargent, Mandy Metzger and David Tenney

**BLM STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:** Raymond Suazo, Dorothea Boothe, Amber Cargile, Tim Burke, Mary D'Aversa, Tim Shannon, Roxie Trost, June Shoemaker, Aaron Wilkerson, Marjorie Chiles, Kathy Pedrick, Bill Gibson, Ruth Zimmerman, Bill Werner, Deborah Stevens, Ken Mahoney and Susan Williams

**GUESTS/MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:** Bill Civish, Dan Shein, Mike Ferguson, Gerald Hillier, Holly Taylor, Glen Collins and Frances Werner

**AGENDA ITEM: State Director's Introduction and Update on BLM Programs and Issues**  
 Ray Suazo, BLM Arizona State Director/Designated Federal Official

State Director Ray Suazo also thanked everyone for attending and welcomed them to the RAC meeting. He recognized new members, Mandy Metzger (not in attendance), Krishna Parameswaran and David Tenney (not in attendance), and returning (reappointed) members Dawn Duncan-Hubbs, and Gary Watson.

Suazo discussed the role of the RAC stating that many folks have played a strong role to make this a successful RAC. You are the stewards of public lands. This RAC works well together providing advice to the BLM. The RAC's charter is in your packets. Suazo affirmed that his interest is in utilizing all of the knowledge that the RAC members bring to the table to help make good informed decisions to provide appropriate uses on public lands. He said he looks at issues coming before the BLM to set the stage, and to come together with diverse input from RAC members. The RAC works well because they are not afraid to put issues on the table. The best use of RAC members' time is listening to input from all members. Meetings are focused on issues outlined as a priority. A process has been established for the RAC to request items to be placed on the agenda by working through the RAC chair Bill Brake.

As a result of the working group meetings, Suazo recently issued an internal memo to the State Leadership Team that described where it's possible for the BLM to consider the input that this RAC provides with regard to the six Secretarial themes as the BLM plans and deals with issues. Suazo also noted the BLM is trying to prepare briefing materials in advance of meetings so that members are informed and have an opportunity to read the material ahead of time to have more productive working group sessions.

RAC nominations will be open through March 20, 2015, to fill terms expiring in September 2015. Nominations are being accepted for five vacancies in categories 1, 2, and 3. For those of you up for reappointment please consider reapplying or if you know of someone you'd like to nominate to serve on the RAC, please contact Dorothea Boothe, BLM RAC Coordinator. Members of the RAC are appointed through the Secretary of the Interior.

The National Conservation Lands 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary is this year. This celebrates the establishment of the National Landscape Conservation System, made up of special areas collectively called the National Conservation Lands. These special areas include national monuments, national conservation areas, wilderness areas, national scenic and historic trails, wild and scenic rivers, wilderness study areas, and other congressional designations. The mission of the National Conservation Lands is to "conserve, protect and restore nationally significant landscapes for their outstanding cultural, ecological, and scientific values for the benefit of current and future generations."

BLM Arizona manages 5 national monuments, 3 national conservation areas, 47 wilderness areas, 1 national scenic trail and portions of 2 national historic trails, and 2 wilderness study areas.

As part of our celebration, BLM's social media sites, particularly Facebook, Instagram, and Tumbler, are being used to feature the National Conservation Lands 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary. On or close to the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month, the BLM will post information to the social media sites featuring a 'Top 15' list on a topic that highlights the special qualities and sites on National Conservation Lands units.

BLM Director Neil Kornze has asked all BLM offices to take advantage of events, activities, and public outreach opportunities to recognize the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary the National Conservation Lands in general and the specific 15<sup>th</sup> anniversaries of the areas making up the system.

**BLM National Conservation Lands Showcase:** The BLM had a visible presence in this year's Super Bowl XLIX. Located in the heart of Super Bowl Central in downtown Phoenix, the BLM Communications team transformed a conference room into the BLM National Conservation Lands Showcase. Suazo was pleased with the results of the Showcase. Interactions with the public were very positive with over 7,500 visitors stopping by the showcase during a 4-day period. The outreach materials, such as brochures, maps, posters and bookmarks, featuring the BLM National Conservation Lands, were a hit with children, adults and families. In addition, BLM's social media campaign was very successful, inviting the public to visit and enjoy National Conservation Lands in Arizona and across the country. Suazo noted RAC members had an opportunity to tour the Showcase yesterday and Amber Cargile highlighted the outreach concepts she and her team developed and supported during Super Bowl week.

### **Renewable Energy and Transmission Update**

BLM Arizona is embarking on an initiative to rebrand the renewable energy program and update its approach so that the work being done is more apparent to the public. The BLM's focus is to raise awareness with not only the public, but with industry, state and local government agencies, and universities as well. The theme is *BLM Arizona is Renewable Ready*, emphasizing our efforts to identify public lands suitable for energy development and transmission. The Sonoran Solar Energy, Quartzsite Solar and Mohave County Wind Farm projects have signed Records of Decision (ROD). In each case, the applicant companies are working to secure Power Purchase Agreements (PPA) before beginning construction. The Maricopa Solar Park project is on hold while the applicant, Marisol Energy 2, evaluates market conditions and pursues a PPA.

The BLM issued the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the Southline Transmission project in April 2014 and is analyzing comments submitted from the public on that document. A final EIS for the project is expected in spring 2015.

In January 2015, Secretary Jewell signed the Record of Decision for the SunZia Southwest Transmission Project. BLM New Mexico is the lead agency on the project. Suazo also traveled to New Mexico for the signing.

### **Solar Regional Mitigation Strategy**

Arizona has three solar energy zones (SEZ) – Brenda, Gillespie, and Agua Caliente totaling 8,516 acres. As part of the process to make the SEZs competitive as renewable energy sites, the BLM is developing a solar regional mitigation survey (SRMS) to identify unavoidable impacts of utility-scale solar development.

This process is a stakeholder-driven effort to evaluate and clarify impacts, identify appropriate mitigation measures, and set a per-acre fee to be paid by developers to fund agreed upon mitigation measures. Interested stakeholders include tribes, nongovernmental organizations, industry, local, State, and Federal agencies.

BLM Arizona is working with Argonne National Labs on this initiative, which we anticipate will be completed by July 2015.

### **Healthy Lands Restoration**

The RAC received an overview from Kelly Castillo and Rance Marquez yesterday on the Healthy Lands Focal Areas and restoration project areas. This is an important landscape initiative that BLM has developed to make a significant restoration impact on the lands we manage. Suazo said he's looking forward to hearing the RAC's thoughts on BLM's approach.

### **Lake Havasu Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Update**

Suazo said he's excited about the MOU because it's an opportunity to bring Federal, State, and local partnerships together to address issues that have persisted for a number of years in the Lake Havasu area. The outcome is that you get all the different interests at the table bringing clarity to the roles and responsibilities on the lake. Roxie's team has done a spectacular job on the MOU.

### **Florence WH&B Training & Holding Facility/Wild Horse Inmate Training Program (WHIP)**

In 2013, the BLM entered into a partnership with the Arizona Department of Corrections / Arizona Corrections Industries (ACI) at the prison in Florence, Arizona to serve as a national holding and training facility for up to 1,000 head of animals. The partnership assists the BLM in advancing its national goals and provides an opportunity for inmates to develop work skills to gentle the animals by halter, saddle and lead-rope training. This training program is called the Wild Horse Inmate Training Program. Suazo pointed out that this is the only facility that is currently training burros in the BLM's holding system. He said he recently toured the facility with some of his leadership team and it was very impressive. One of the highlights was the facility's sustainability – the fact that they use recycled materials wherever possible, i.e. water troughs are made out of old tractor tires, and recycled fencing was used to build the corrals.

On November 22, BLM and the Arizona Department of Corrections had a well-attended open house and invited members of the public to tour the facility. In 2014, 74 animals were adopted out of the facility.

### **The Six Secretarial Themes:**

At the past several RAC meetings, Suazo asked the RAC to consider the Secretary of the Interior's six priorities, and to give BLM some suggestions on ways that it can engage with these priorities. The six priorities are: America's Great Outdoors, Climate Change, Native American Nations, New Energy Frontier, Water Challenges, and Youth. The RAC provided ideas in two major categories: America's Great Outdoors/Youth and Climate Change/Water Challenges/Healthy Landscapes.

The RAC's work on this topic has been very useful and Suazo is currently directing his State leadership to look for opportunities to incorporate them into their plan of work for this year and out years. Many of the RAC's suggestions look to the long-term and this is beneficial as the BLM begins to prepare budget submissions for future fiscal years. Also of importance is your emphasis on the engagement with partners, especially as it benefits our youth.

Suazo vowed to keep the RAC informed as BLM engages in opportunities to make the RAC's suggestions a reality.

Suazo informed the RAC that he recently sent the new Governor, Doug Ducey, a letter to share with him the many things the agency does on BLM public lands. He hopes to meet with the Governor soon and establish a good working relationship on common issues.

### **Personnel Updates:**

**Creation of the Southwest Region Pilot/Senior Advisor position:** As part of BLM's emphasis on advancing a regional landscape approach, BLM-Arizona introduced a 1-year Southwest Region pilot initiative that will help the BLM better address emerging regional issues across both Arizona and New Mexico. A main focus is the Gila River that starts in New Mexico and ends up in Arizona, including issues such as drought and water demands, climate change, border impacts, recreation, wildlife, and renewable energy... all issues that cross many borders. The pilot initiative will focus on forging strategic partnerships with State and Federal agencies, gubernatorial task forces, Tribal Governments and other regional stakeholders, which we believe are essential in tackling these significant challenges facing the Southwest. The BLM is designating a senior advisor who will be dedicated to leading BLM's approach to these regional issues, including building the strategic plans and partnerships needed to address them. I am pleased to announce that Julie Decker, Deputy State Director for Resources in the Arizona State Office, has been selected to fill this critical leadership role. Decker brings more than 25 years of experience in resource management. She stepped out of her DSD duties and assumed the role of Senior Advisor / Southwest Region Pilot on September 29, and reports to both the Arizona and New Mexico State Directors. During the 1-year pilot initiative, June Shoemaker assumed the duties of Acting DSD for Renewable Resources and Becky Heick will serve as the Acting DSD for Non-Renewable Resources. Both will report to the State Director, as will Kelly Castillo, who continues to serve as the Arizona State Fire Management Officer. When this pilot is done, BLM will review everything and figure out the path forward. Thanks to the BLM staff for stepping forward. The BLM is successful because of you. The RAC is asked to weigh in on the pilot and give us your thoughts.

**DISCUSSION:** Brake stated that the RAC has a better idea of what the State Director is asking for and the RAC will give the BLM ideas and advise on how to proceed. Brake also mentioned there will be a recognition ceremony for former RAC member Glen Collins.

Suazo continued adding, Glen has been one of the longest serving members of the Arizona Resource Advisory Council, since the RAC was established in 1995. With only a 1-year break in service, Glen has been a valuable advisor to the BLM in everything from the development of the Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Administration to the strategic thinking and formulation of recommendations for the BLM Arizona recreation strategy, as well as the development of the Recreation Resource Advisory Council's protocols and processes. Glen's interest and understanding of the BLM's mission is due to his extensive experience as a Federal and State natural resource manager and because of his love of public lands. He has been a steadfast contributor to the collaborative process, always willing to listen to the full complement of perspectives, but never shying away from offering his thoughtful advice, opinions and constructive mediation. His unwavering participation has also made the Arizona RAC one of the BLM's most productive FACA-chartered groups. On behalf of the BLM Arizona State Leadership and past State Directors, I am honored to recognize Glen for all of his dedication and excellent contributions to the Arizona RAC.

### **AGENDA ITEM: Rapid Ecoregional Assessments (REA) (Madrean) Overview**

Aaron Wilkerson, BLM Soil, Water and Air Specialist (PowerPoint Presentation)

BLM is looking at the landscape approach initiative and how the REAs fit into landscape planning. This is a national effort taking a multi-scale landscape approach. Defining a landscape is going to vary by the driving resource or issue at hand. A large landscape scale issue may be looking at the condition of all rangelands, and a smaller landscape scale issue could be grazing permit renewals or recreation management. The BLM needs to look across boundaries both internally and externally and understand how

to assess current conditions. None of our resource issues are divided by jurisdictional border boundaries. Four REAs in Arizona that have included the Colorado Plateau, Sonoran Desert, Mojave Basin, and Madrean Archipelago. The REA products are used in localized planning in project prioritization, climate change, National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), integrated vegetation management, and offsite mitigation. The REAs address information gaps identified at the broad scale or ecoregions across all ownerships. Teams were built from specialists within the BLM, sister agencies, partners, and stakeholders. There will be a final report for the Madrean REA available soon. There is a workshop planned in June 2015 in Tucson and RAC members will be invited to attend. Webinars will also be available.

#### **DISCUSSION:**

Thomas Hulén: I did not see any fish in the presentation. Does this include the Aravaipa Canyon area? Wilkerson stated that Aravaipa is included.

Larry Howery: There was a task force formed to address issues for the Kingman area regarding the 10-year permit renewal. How do you integrate years of site-specific data collected by the BLM and separate climate from livestock grazing issues?

Wilkerson: The REAs were not developed for site-specific issues. They were designed for larger landscape. Anything site-specific would involve doing more inventories.

Suazo stated that the intent is not to change all decisions currently in place. This data gives you a framework to start discussions. We want to make sure we are paying attention to all potential impacts and issues by broadening the thought process.

Dawn Duncan-Hubbs: I am hopeful that cultural resources management will be overlaid on top of the current layers and a priority for the NEPA process, but also for the consultation. Using a tool like this saves time, money, and energy. How in the model would uncertainty/unexpected variables be addressed? Can you elaborate on off-site mitigation?

Wilkerson: Off-site mitigation is being discussed at the national level.

Krishna Parameswaran: Change agents mention negative aspects. Are there some change agents that are positive and need to be considered?

Wilkerson: Yes, change agents are measured with zero (0) being negative and one (1) being positive.

June Shoemaker: In off-site mitigation, we are trying to identify impacted areas that can be restored.

#### **AGENDA ITEM: Sonoran Landscape Pilot Update**

Mary D'Aversa, BLM Phoenix District Manager and June Shoemaker, BLM Acting Deputy State Director for Resources

This is a continuation of past updates. This is a statewide project that falls in the greater Phoenix and Lower Sonoran areas. After Christmas, there was a Tread Lightly outreach effort in the Table Mesa area where people target shoot, and over 250 brochures were handed out with positive feedback. The brochures promoted open access and cleaning up shooting debris. Trash cleanups are planned and the big cleanup will be Sunday, March 1, 2015, in the Table Mesa Area picking up shooting debris and trash along with resource work like mending fences. Over 300 people have signed up to help. Mary will email PDF

versions of the brochures to Dorothea, and she will forward them to the RAC members.

The Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD) shooting sports liaison, Jay Cook, has been replaced by Marty Fabritz. Marty has many contacts in the shooting world.

The BLM is getting great visibility with Trigger Trash billboards located around the valley. The Cronkite School of Journalism, along with the AZGFD and Sheriff's offices distributed smart shoot responsible materials. Target shooting is an appropriate use of public lands, but leaving a mess behind is not. Information is also being provided at local gun shows and point-of-sale places. Director Suazo has directed us to update our strategy, which should be complete by the next RAC meeting. We are continuing to update our goals and develop new ones.

### **DISCUSSION:**

Hulen: I was contacted by someone who participated in the Table Mesa cleanup, and he stated that a couple weeks after the cleanup it was filled with shooting trash again. How is this elsewhere in the State? Are we seeing a difference on the ground? Mary D'Aversa stated that Table Mesa is unusual as it is a high-intensity place in regards to other shooting sites. It will take longevity with this campaign until we see a difference with shooters.

Shoemaker stated that we are developing a monitoring plan with Northern Arizona University to obtain monitoring data that will show any change. This is a long-term project.

Suazo also stated that this is a long-term issue. We are building partnerships with people saying we need more responsible recreational shooting. The Forest Service is now working with concepts that involve all public lands. Even the shooters and off-highway-vehicle (OHV) users are talking about protecting the resources. BLM Arizona hosted the Executive Leadership Team a couple weeks ago and coordinated a field trip for them to see the issues and think about recreational shooting and what is happening on the ground. We are going in the right direction.

D'Aversa: Staff is on site on a regular basis cleaning up. We are also looking at some monitoring options.

Hulen: I was hunting last weekend in the Prescott area and encountered an old gravel pit where recreational shooters are actually cleaning up the area before leaving. For the record, I would like to see national monuments treated differently.

Maggie Sacher mentioned how proud she was to be on the RAC the first time she saw the Clean up Trigger Trash billboards on the freeways. Sacher said this is a great way to reach the public.

Michael Quigley: How do we know we are not continually cleaning up the same areas and shifting the shooting to other areas? Are the areas being monitored? I have been working with rock climbers in southern Arizona and they stated that more people are getting into the sport. Rock climbers are attempting to educate new rock climbers before they go outside and climb.

Suazo: This is evolving. In this project we learn what works and what doesn't work, and how to improve and make adjustments. We have learned what the shooters want. The AZGFD opened a long-range shooting facility that may change things. The public needs to be engaged in the project. We are at the 2-year point and will look at the progress and update the strategy.

D'Aversa: Trash and target trash seem to come together. Targets amount to most of the shooting trash.

Mica Schotborgh: Will this be an ongoing program in the future since this is a pilot?

Per Suazo, it will be addressed in the strategies.

### **AGENDA ITEM: Status of Travel Management Plans (TMP)**

Bill Gibson, BLM Outdoor Recreation Planner

Public meetings have been held for the proposed Travel Management Plans (TMPs) in the districts. At the public meetings, the BLM has been asked why they are doing travel management. This goes back to the 1970s with two Executive Orders under Presidents Nixon and Carter instructing land management agencies that they will manage OHVs in a manner to not destroy resources or create conflicts or infringe upon wilderness areas. The BLM and Forest Service then developed regulations in 1979 on how to manage motorized roads and trails. Into the 1980s, the last generation of Resource Management Plans (RMPs) covered OHV use that will be managed to include existing roads and trails, but one problem was that we rarely publicized the maps of the existing roads and trails. When we had the explosion of motorcycle and OHV use into the 80s and into the 90s, then we began to see a huge proliferation in routes. Innovative people in the Yuma and Phoenix areas started doing route inventories and producing maps in those areas, but it wasn't enough. In 2001, the BLM did a series of public listening sessions and went to the users to request their suggestions on how to manage the public lands and OHV use. This became the OHV strategy in 2001 and signed four days before President Clinton left office. Statistics show how sales of ATVs exploded and people could ride just about anywhere. The BLM morphed OHV management into travel management. The travel management team decided that the designation of primitive roads and trails would be comprehensive, interdisciplinary, outcome based, and collaborative among the agencies and partner groups involved. Here in Arizona we began to inventory routes in various districts. We developed our inventory with the Arizona State Parks and the Forest Service. At the BLM we have over 37,000 miles of primitive roads and trails. Nationally, we estimated 500,000 legacy routes of primitive roads and trails. How do we officially designate a transportation system? The Forest Service and Park Service have had a transportation system for decades. The BLM transportation system has been inherited over the years through the use of mining and mostly from recreational use. Are there going to be special recreation areas that address motorized and non-motorized travel? There needs to be a well-developed transportation system in Arizona. Our route analysis process is very detailed and we start with the Resource Management Plan decisions that address what the uses are. What is the outcome based on recreation? How are we going to manage for rangeland health? The route analysis was developed by a contractor in 2003. We have analyzed 80% of the State, and the transportation system is 100% inventoried. The travel management areas have been divided into 40 sub regions in the State. These areas are recognized in the land use plans. We designate primitive roads and trails from the land use plans, and determine how will designating or closing a route affect our soil, vegetation, mineral development, grazing, recreational experience, etc.

### **DISCUSSION:**

Sacher: Do you put wildlife habitat under connectivity or is it not one of the evaluating criteria?

Gibson: Yes, wildlife habitat is an important aspect in developing a route analysis, which is a basis for the travel management plans. The AZGFD is also at the table when we develop or route analysis. In doing the inventory, we had access to BLM funds, gas tax dollars, Arizona OHV sticker funds, and partner funding to allow Federal agencies to do the planning. All four districts in Arizona have been inventoried. The next step is the development of the TMP. Archaeological sites are very important in the TMP. In the public

process we ask the public if we missed any routes. In the route analysis process we will entertain proposals for new routes. There are a number of new routes created in the Table Mesa area. We have to address routes that are created after the inventory.

Hulen: If you have a route that has been used for a number of years and it's closed, then does it make it difficult for law enforcement to enforce a closed route?

Gibson: Yes, it has been an issue. That is why we are trying to complete the TMPs. Until the official designation is made we will not be putting out maps. We can share the inventory system with the public. In the Phoenix District, we have partnered with Cell One that has the capability of taking our data, putting it in a file, and then the public can download the information.

Quigley: There are a number of people in the communities that I talk with that feel that the route inventory is flawed in adopting routes that exist. If the inventory had been done in 1980, you would have a much different baseline. The guidance came out at the end of the Clinton administration. A number of people feel the baseline inventory creating user routes is inappropriate and that the decision process needs to be more deliberate in what's needed, why it's needed, potential impacts, redundancy in the road network, and maintenance cost that the BLM will absorb to maintain these roads is a consideration. For example, the Forest Service had to look at what they can afford to maintain. The question is that given the hodge podge of land ownership in Arizona, is there any specific attention given to where a specific route crosses land between Federal agencies?

Gibson: All of our travel management coordinators in the office are working with other agencies. There are routes that go back and forth between managing agencies.

Brake: There is a law stating the use of Federal public lands is different than the use on State lands. You cannot go on State land without permission to hunt, etc. People hunting on State land think they also have access to Federal land, which is confusing. I think that the agencies need to get together so the public knows how this works. Many people recreating on public lands feel this is necessary, but the general public thinks this is a waste of money because the rules won't be enforced. There needs to be some type of enforcement.

Taylor: The Healthy Landscapes involved mechanized clearing. This creates new routes by the mechanized clearing. All of the vehicles going through the forests create new routes. This is a big problem to restore the land to the intended condition.

Gibson: Monitoring is an important part of TMPs. There are places in the Phoenix and Arizona Strip Districts where we have hired contractors that have agreements with the universities that will monitor heavily-used areas to see what the trends are. We have never had a transportation system in the BLM, but we will get there. I have found in public land management that if you sign the routes and provide maps to the public 95% of the people will be responsible land users.

Brake: Once you map the land, you need to look at how to get the signs out there. We need to start having meetings with the Border Patrol as they seem to create their own routes.

Hubbs: How are the TMPs addressing impacts, litigation, and signage to inform the public of sacred sites? I hope there aren't signs being posted for archaeological sites. We have been hearing about mitigation and overlap in the various programs. How is baseline data being used and where is it coming from?

Gibson: All of our TMPs are supported by Environmental Assessments. When we do a route analysis we focus our monitoring efforts on sensitive habitat. If we notice through monitoring that there is a problem, then we may close the route seasonally and only allow permitted uses. We have various types of closures. The data in the State is from a Ground Transportation Linear Feature (GTLF) inventory data that also contains attribute information for each route. This information is available to the public. There are national data standards that we have to adhere to. When routes are updated the GTLF is also updated.

Hulen: With the Forest Service it has been an issue the past few years about big game retrieval. Has BLM had this problem with people driving off designated roads and trails to retrieve their game?

Gibson: No we haven't had a problem, but people should stay on the designated route for big game retrieval. The BLM has completed 20% of the designated routes. (Gibson passed out a map showing the travel management areas.)

Suazo: This was a request from the RAC to be an agenda item. You can see that it is vitally important to have inventories and set the stage for the planning process.

Brake: It would be appropriate at future RAC meetings to give us an update on the TMP.

Gibson: There will be a Travel Management Planning course on May 20-21, 2015, at the BLM National Training Center. RAC members are invited to attend (Dorothea will email the info to RAC members).

Shoemaker stated that the BLM, AZGFD, Forest Service, Arizona Department of Transportation, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) meet annually to discuss these issues. The next multi-agency meeting is in March. We are moving forward to identify the issues.

### **Public Comment Period**

Comments by Gerald Hillier, Executive Director, QuadState Local Governments Authority, LaPaz County.

- With the discussion of the REAs, and the “landscape” approach, BLM should/must be in contact with local governments, particularly County planning directors. Counties could use the data. BLM should not withhold private land data from owners, and before any “landscape” planning was done, counties must be engaged.
- The Authority is engaged with the Desert Landscape Conservation Cooperative (DLCC), and while not a member of the inner circle (Steering Committee), it is part of the Local Government Work Group. As such we are attempting to make clear that local Governments should be or could be a partner, and must be consulted. They must not be ignored. We have expressed concerns relative to both the REAs and the DLCC regarding the various presentations of “management questions,” the work that both are supposed to address. Who are the “managers” who developed the lists? How were they developed? All seem to focus on climate change being a reality.
- Relative to travel management, I cited the litigation in California, and warned about the prospect of Federal judges getting engaged in route designation. I also cited that the litigants (an Arizona organization, among others, the Center for Biological Diversity) wanted specific minimization criteria for route designation, and had so convinced the Court. I simply warned that in viewing proliferation, BLM Arizona ought to at least include something on that.

I also noted that in Clark County, Nevada, I had just become aware that the BLM was threatening to remove dry washes from designated routes. They are critical for access, but change with each runoff event. Wash designation was critical, and means must be included to adapt to changing stream courses.

I also cited that in California, the plaintiffs were leaning very hard on the BLM to develop quantitative monitoring, to assure compliance and non-proliferation. Having worked with routes and the OHV processes for many years, such quantification was well-nigh impossible, but needed to be addressed as part of establishing base lines. (There was not time to get into any specifics.)

- Relative to monitoring for climate change and other stressors being addressed by both the REAs and DLCC, I urged that BLM adopt consistent monitoring protocols. This was important to assure data is comparable among sites and will assure consistency over time.

#### **DISCUSSION:**

Brake stated that we cannot respond to the comments now, but they are extremely important to us. Please do this in writing and submit to me and I will make sure the questions go to the appropriate people at the BLM. Your comments are a part of the agenda as we go forward.

#### **AGENDA ITEM: Law Enforcement Partnerships and Monument Resources in Southern Arizona**

Kathy Pedrick, BLM Special Assistant to the State Director and Jon Young, BLM State Chief Ranger  
A short southern Arizona border video was shown at the meeting.

In the year 2000, illegal border traffic and drug smuggling increased. Trash was building up along the border and in the canyons. This became a huge problem so a Southwest Strategy Group was formed. As a result a Border Management Task Force (BMTF) was formed in Tucson. The BLM Arizona has 44 border miles out of 374 miles, two national Monuments and wilderness areas within 100 miles of the border. The border strategy is to provide a safe and secure environment for the public. All sources of resources are impacted, wildlife habitat, cultural sites are damaged. We are coordinating with other agencies, especially the Border Patrol.

Mitigation projects consist of trash cleanups, restoration of illegal routes, revegetation of damaged lands, repair of fences, coordination with Operation Reclaim Our Arizona Monuments (ROAM), and since 2010 the BLM has been focusing on the Sonoran Desert National Monument (SDNM) and the Ironwood Forest National Monument (IFNM). Volunteer groups help with cleanups and route restoration. There are still areas with lots of trash, but because of Law Enforcement it is not as bad as it used to be. The Border Patrol provided the supplies to create Normandy barriers to put in strategic areas to protect fragile areas.

The Public Liaison Partnership (PLP) was created to work with the BLM and the BMTF. They learn about NEPA, cultural and wildlife issues, etc. Since 2003, the BLM reports border updates annually on the BLM website and submits reports to Congress. Currently, we are working on the reports for 2014.

Suazo: I am pleased with the PLP system because early with the BMTF and the border issues it was strictly about the Border Patrol mission and their issues. Through our partnership the Border Patrol now recognizes our mission. They get archaeology training, etc. The Border Patrol understands that the BLM mission is equally important. There is an annual border forum meeting where all the agencies get together and discuss the many border issues.

Young: The border impact started to increase in 2000-2003 on public lands. In 2009-2010, we started to see a dramatic change in the amount of violence and activity on both the SDNM and IFNM so Operation ROAM was established to increase Law Enforcement presence on the Monuments to address impacts on the resources at risk (threatened and endangered species, sensitive species). These Monuments are routinely used by the public who want to recreate on public lands without encountering smugglers and illegal activity.

Why Operation ROAM? The public demands and expects us to reclaim our National Monuments. As we kicked off Operation ROAM in 2010, there was an operation called Trident. There was a Secretarial memo from Homeland Security to the Secretary of the Interior wanting the agencies on the ground to work together. This was a great operation, but it didn't have any clear resource goals such as trash collection and removal of illegal roads and trails. As we went forward with Operation ROAM, we took these Trident goals and we still do this work today with agencies working side by side. We bring people in to work for 14 continuous days to get two full work weeks out of our resource crews. Community involvement is also important.

#### **DISCUSSION:**

Suazo: The video is part of the history that got us where we are today, and we still have a job to do. There are a lot of RAC members here today that were not a part of this issue 5 years ago.

Brake: Law Enforcement is doing a great job! I have a ranch 35 miles from the border and they have done a great job cleaning up, but the illegals are still there.

Young: The approach we are taking is good. We are making a huge difference, but there is still a lot to do.

Suazo: We have looked at our strategy on an annual basis and adjusted operations. The BLM's mission is resource protection, and working in partnership with other agencies in regard to their mission.

Taylor: One of my most exciting experiences was going with the BLM and looking at an archaeological site in the IFNM, and being in the middle of a chase with drug dealers crossing the desert. These folks were crossing through the Indian reservation, and then emerging 50-60 miles north into the IFNM. What is the BLM's relationship with the Tribe?

Young: We partner with the Tohono O'odham's Nation's Law Enforcement, Tohono Rangers, Department of Homeland Security, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and the Border Patrol. All of these agencies are patrolling on a daily basis. These agencies also participate in our BMTF. The cartels seem to target these remote areas and stay away from Tucson and Phoenix.

Hulen: How many arrests did BLM rangers make on the SDNM in 2014?

Young: Approximately 15 drug smuggling arrests were made on BLM lands in 2014. The BLM does not have the authority to arrest for human smuggling. If we identify people suspected in the country illegally, we contact the Border Patrol and detain them until the Border Patrol arrives.

Brake: Do you have the authority to ticket illegal shooting and OHV's off the road?

Young: Yes we do. We can ticket people on OHVs for not staying on designated roads. Shooting on most public lands throughout Arizona is allowed so we focus on trash left behind associated with target shooting.

Sometimes we make arrests of people who are not authorized to have weapons. We have 35 BLM uniformed officers and 7 non-uniformed special agents.

Hubbs: For the Arizona Game and Fish Department, when you get a permit you get it right away. Would the permitting system allow for finger permitting to better identify people and alert the Border Patrol of violations?

Suazo: A lot of that dialogue happens with State statutes in the Law Enforcement arena. Information sharing happens on what is taking place relating to Project ROAM, and we should not get into Law Enforcement issues.

## **DISTRICT MANAGER REPORTS**

**Arizona Strip District:** Tim Burke, District Manager

**Landscape Restoration Project for Grand Canyon-Parashant National Monument and Arizona Strip Field Office.** The Uinkaret Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is being developed to analyze landscape level integrated vegetation management needs within a 128,500 acre planning area in the Uinkaret Mountains, including the Mt. Logan and Mt. Trumbull wilderness areas. The public involvement process began with the publishing of the NOI in the *Federal Register* on October 21, 2014. Two open house meetings to solicit public comments were held during the scoping period, one in St. George, Utah on November 12 and one in Flagstaff, Arizona on December 3, 2014. The BLM is studying vegetation management treatment needs to restore biodiversity and properly functioning ecological conditions within the project area. An EIS will be prepared to study vegetation management utilizing treatment methods including but not limited to: mechanical, chemical, prescribed fire, and managing lightning caused wildfires to allow fire to play its ecological role on the landscape—an approach known as “managing for multiple objectives.”

### **Arizona Strip Field Office (ASFO)**

The Arizona Strip Field Office continues to support studies determined necessary by the Management Oversight Team for the Northern Arizona Withdrawal to gather additional information on potential impacts to the Grand Canyon watershed from uranium mining.

The ASFO continues to work with the USGS on implementing studies identified by the Northern Arizona Withdrawal Management Oversight Team to study impacts associated with uranium mining on the Grand Canyon watershed. The ASFO, working jointly with USGS, has established a passive dust sampler network at the Pinenut and Arizona 1 mines - these networks are critical in obtaining data from mine sites in various stages of operations (from active mining to reclamation). The USGS is covering salaries to deploy the dust samplers and analyze data once it is collected and downloaded: BLM personnel are periodically (once every three months, or depending on changes in mining activities such as the transition into mine closure) collecting dust samples/downloading anemometer data to send to the USGS. The BLM also purchased the anemometer and data logger.

### **Travel Management Plan (ASFO)**

The Arizona Strip Field Office released the preliminary Travel Management Plan/Environmental Assessment (TMP/EA) for the Littlefield, Colorado City, and St. George Basin Travel sub-regions in August 2013 for a 30-day public comment period. Numerous public comments were received, and the Arizona Strip Field Office has addressed all comments. This included making revisions to the proposed transportation network.

The Arizona Strip Field Office is currently consulting with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) over the potential impacts of the proposed transportation network. This consultation is the final step in the TMP/EA process. The Arizona Strip Field Office anticipates the decision on route designations to occur later this year (probably in the summer). The BLM will then begin its TMP/EA process for the next portion of the field office, the remainder of Mohave County.

The TMP route designations for Vermilion Cliffs National Monument have been largely implemented with signage or rehabilitation of closed routes.

### **Vermilion Cliffs National Monument (ASFO)**

The Paria Canyon Coyote Buttes Special Management Area permit system is being moved to [Recreation.gov](http://Recreation.gov) and will include fee adjustments. The Paria Management Team, consisting of staff with the Vermilion Cliffs National Monument, the Kanab Field Office, and the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, is preparing a Paria Business Management Plan to guide future business practices in the Paria Canyon-Coyote Buttes Special Management Area (SMA). It is anticipated that a Draft Business Plan will be available for public review in the winter of 2015. A description of potential changes to the online permit delivery system will be included. BLM staff, under recommendations from the Washington Office, is in the process of moving the online permitting system to [Recreation.gov](http://Recreation.gov). The staff is working with the contractor to establish the business practices that would be required so they can be described in the Business Plan. This change of provider may result in increased permit costs. Other fee adjustments in managing the SMA will also be described in the Business Plan. A draft copy of the Business Plan will be provided to the members of the Recreation RAC prior to the release to the public. Pending any changes to process, a formal hearing to present the Paria Business Plan to the Recreation RAC and full RAC will need to be scheduled in the spring or summer of 2015.

### **Grand Canyon-Parashant National Monument (ASFO)**

Throughout 2015, the Grand Canyon-Parashant National Monument will be developing the Mojave Network sponsored Diverse Outdoor Leadership Institute (DOLI) program. The DOLI is a three-tiered age-based program with the goal to provide Federal agencies with a strong pool of knowledgeable and effective leaders and instructors. Participants would come from diverse and underrepresented communities found in Southwest Utah, Northwest Arizona, and the Las Vegas metro area. Graduates from the program would be able to compete for various internships, Youth Conservation Corps, Public Land Corps, and other field crew opportunities found in various Federal service agencies.

### **Colorado River District: Roxie Trost, District Manager**

#### **Law Enforcement**

The Colorado River District (CRD) Law Enforcement Rangers (Rangers) have had a busy winter patrolling long and short-term camping areas as well as assisting on national details such as Operation ROAM and at the Imperial Sand Dunes. At this time, visitation is down from previous years at CRD's many dispersed 14-day and Long-Term Visitor Areas, however Rangers spend a great deal of time patrolling recreation sites associated with these areas, as well as our many other areas related to cultural, mining, wilderness, and mineral resources. Unexpectedly, the Yuma Field Office (YFO) Rangers spent several days assisting the fire program on security detail on the 1,110 acre Walker Fire in the Mittry Lake Wildlife Area over the 2014 year-end holiday period.

#### **Fire Management Program**

The CRD Fire program has remained active with fire responses into the new year. The local Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Fire program in Yuma has been without staff to respond to BIA fires and the CRD has

managed the majority of BIA incidents in the fall and winter months, as well as managing the BLM fires. The most significant fire was the human caused Walker Fire that started on December 23, 2014, and lasted through the New Year's holiday. A total of 1,110 acres burned in riparian and marsh habitat. The YFO has requested burned area rehab funding to help ensure that native vegetation can gain a strong foundation in the future rather than invasive species.

The CRD Fire program will also work in Kingman in cooperation with the AZGFD, as well as several BLM range permittees and special interest groups, to restore and enhance habitat for Mule deer. AZGFD funding for the project has been derived through tax revenues generated from sales of firearms, ammunition, and outdoor gear. The Fire program's role will be to implement prescribed burn treatments to provide young, more palatable vegetation for Mule deer and return fire to fire adapted ecosystems. The overall objective is to provide quality habitat necessary for healthy Mule deer populations. An estimated 3,000 acres will be treated this winter and additional treatments will occur in subsequent years. This project not only builds cooperative relationships with area partners but brings in funding from outside of the BLM to implement treatments. The treatment areas have been a part of the CRD Fire program's overarching plan for many years and cooperative efforts will help to ensure success for all of the partners involved.

### **Tribal Consultation**

The YFO has recently coordinated with the Arizona State Office on the Class III archaeological survey of the Agua Caliente Solar Energy Zone. During this coordination effort, the local Tribes were all invited to participate in the survey efforts. Several of the Tribes showed interest in participating, and in October, representatives from the Cocopah and Ft. Yuma-Quechan Indian Tribes met with the BLM at the survey site and discussed their participation. The Cocopah Tribe wanted to participate in the ceramic analysis, and the Quechan Tribe wanted to use the survey as a training exercise for their cultural monitoring students. The survey is scheduled to take place in January and both tribes anticipate taking part.

The Department of the Interior is providing oversight for the ongoing environmental investigation and remediation to address the release of hazardous materials originating from the Topock Natural Gas Compressor Station. Previous waste disposal practices at the Compressor Station have resulted in soil and groundwater contamination both at the point of source location, as well as on and under adjacent Federal properties managed by the BLM and the FWS.

The Pacific Gas & Electric Company has developed a 90% design document for the groundwater remedy, which is currently under review by the Tribes. A Tribal consultation meeting for the 90% design was held with the Hualapai Tribal Council in Peach Springs, Arizona, on October 15, 2014. Additional Tribal Council meetings were held with the Fort Mohave Indian Tribe on January 23, 2015, and the Chemehuevi Indian Tribe on January 31, 2015.

The Kingman Field Office (KFO) coordinated with the Hualapai Tribe on the clean-up project at the Hillside Mine and fully supports the effort. The KFO continues to coordinate with the Hualapai Tribe on the Bagdad Mine Stockpile Extension Project.

The KFO continues to make progress processing grazing permit renewals for three allotments in Mohave County: the Cerbat, Fort MacEwen, and Quail Springs (CQFM) allotments. The comment period on the Environmental Assessment (EA) for CQFM ended on July 18, 2014. The Interdisciplinary Team is currently reviewing and responding to comments received from reviewers as well as clarifying and revising

the adaptive management process. The KFO anticipates completing revision of the CQFM EA within the next 3 months.

### **Mining**

The BLM is undertaking the NEPA process to analyze the impact of the proposed Bagdad Mine Stockpile Extension Project. A proposal was submitted to the KFO by Freeport-McMoRan Bagdad Inc. during the first quarter of 2014 to modify their Mine Plan of Operations (MPO) at the Bagdad Mine, located in Yavapai County west of the unincorporated community of Bagdad, Arizona. The proposed modification would authorize the extension of an existing, consolidated leach and waste rock stockpile on the south side of the mine. The modification also contemplates the installation of limited, future distributed facilities south of the stockpile. In addition, the Arizona Public Service Company submitted a proposed amendment to an existing right-of-way (ROW) for the construction of access roads to maintain a 115-kilovolt (kV) power line within the same geographic area of the MPO modification. The MPO modification and ROW amendment propose new surface disturbance to approximately 600 acres of public land managed by the BLM and approximately 90 acres of private land. SWCA Environmental Consultants held scoping meetings in Peach Springs, Wikieup, and Prescott, Arizona, in October 2014. SWCA prepared a draft scoping report for KFO review. KFO management will make a decision whether the proposal will be analyzed under an EA or Environmental Impact Statement sometime in January 2015.

### **Lake Havasu Field Office (LHFO)**

The LHFO issued a new 5-year permit in January for the Parker 250/425 races to Best in the Desert, a long standing BLM permittee. Race event dates for 2015 are January 10, 2014, for the Parker 250 motorcycle, UTV, and ATV event and February 7, 2014, for the Parker 425 truck and buggy event. The BLM will participate in the “contingency row” outreach event for each race on January 9, and February 6, 2015. The events bring between 5,000 and 10,000 visitors to the area. Contingency row helps the BLM promote travel management information, share the BLM’s responsible trail use message, and provides an opportunity for customer service interaction with the public. The BLM is coordinating with other Federal, State, and local law enforcement for coverage of the events and will have BLM staff and Best in the Desert staff in place to ensure permit compliance.

### **Recreation Site Modernization Review with Accela**

The LHFO Outdoor Recreation Planner Amanda Deeds and Assistant Field Manager Jason West are currently in consultation with representatives from Accela, a software based company that provides portal services for fee sites. The purpose is to review a potential pilot program for modernization of fee collection at select boat-in campsites within the LHFO. Potential for payment via smartphone, QR codes, and a reservation system are being looked at under a possible vendor agreement. This should help the LHFO with recreation customer service delivery, making payment easy, quick, and instantly traceable. The LHFO staff will be reviewing potential sites with Accela technical representatives February 10-13, 2015, and will provide more information after the initial review.

### **Yuma Field Office (YFO)**

The Mittry Lake Restoration and Rehabilitation (MLR&R) project totals 323 acres between Imperial and Laguna Dams on the Lower Colorado River 10 miles north of Yuma. Fire rehabilitation and ongoing restoration efforts have started to transform the once salt cedar dominated landscape into native habitat which offers an oasis for migratory neo-tropical species including the listed yellow-billed cuckoo and southwestern willow flycatcher.

The YFO partnered with the Northern Arizona University's (NAU) Forestry School and is establishing one of three 20-acre cottonwood willow tree gardens where students from the local NAU campus will study climate change effects at different elevations. This garden is being funded through the National Science Foundation.

The area also offers recreational opportunities at the Betty's Kitchen National Recreation Trail and boating access for fishing and hunting. Betty's Kitchen was recently reopened to the public after a devastating fire in 2011. In 2015, through the Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area partnership, the YFO will convert over 500 feet of invasive Phragmites dominated bank line into native marsh habitat at Betty's Kitchen.

Paradise Cove Restoration - The Paradise Cove East/Transient Area is on 17 acres of BLM/Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) riverfront property in Yuma. This area has experienced illegal border activity, crime, and wildfires. The project includes removing the dense non-native vegetation and replacing it with native cottonwood/willow. With grant money from the AZGFD and in cooperation with the BOR, construction of a walking trail to tie in with existing trails at the Yuma West Wetlands Park has been started. An existing boat ramp, which was silted in, will be re-opened. This area is across the river from a BOR/Quechan Tribe America's Great Outdoors project. The long-term goal is to offer the public safe recreational use of the Lower Colorado River in Yuma. Planning and compliance efforts have been completed, and an agreement with BOR to conduct the construction work has been created.

### **Travel Management**

The YFO continues to work on two Travel Management Plans (TMP); the La Posa TMP in the Quartzsite area and the Imperial Hills TMP in the Martinez Lake/Laguna Dam area in Yuma County. The La Posa TMP was originally scheduled to be finalized in April 2014. However, the YFO will conduct more outreach activities during the winter of 2015 as this TMP generated considerable interest from OHV and rock collecting user groups as well as La Paz County.

The Imperial Hills TMP is located between the BLM concession at Hidden Shores on the south and the community of Martinez Lake on the north, Yuma Proving Ground on the east with the Colorado River marking the western boundary. This plan has the strong support of the AZGFD due to concerns for Big Horn sheep habitat. This is a priority project for the YFO; however, the goal for completion in 2015 is delayed due to a lack of available resources and the delay in completing the La Posa Plan.

### **Gila District:** Tim Shannon, District Manager

To celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Wilderness Act in 2014, the BLM participated with the public and agency partners at the Wild for Wilderness event in November.

Hundreds of adults and children participated in the Wild for Wilderness Festival held at Sabino Canyon on November 8, 2014. Participants were given the chance to complete "bingo cards" that were stamped at each of the 25 activity stations along a two-mile loop trail. The BLM Gila District contributed by hosting two activity stations. Youth could learn about wilderness and skills needed to enjoy wilderness areas. At one station, the Arizona State Office and Safford Field Office specialists taught them how to create a wilderness journal. The other station focused on the Youth in Wilderness program hosted by the Tucson Field Office and included more than a dozen Pascua Yaqui youth.

### **SunZia Southwest Transmission Line**

The permitting process is nearing a conclusion for the SunZia Project, a proposal that includes two 500-kilovolt transmission lines, substations, and ancillary facilities that would be located on Federal, state, and

private lands between central New Mexico and central Arizona. The Final EIS for the project was published in June 2013. The Department received protests on the FEIS due to the amendment of a couple resource management plans in New Mexico. Permitting for the project is being led by the BLM New Mexico.

An EA was prepared and published on November 28, 2014. The EA analyzed the mitigation proposed by White Sands Missile Range (WSMR) to bury five miles of line through the north end of WSMR in New Mexico. The mitigation proposal is intended to reduce the potential impacts to operations of WSMR activities on non-WSMR lands. The 30-day public comment period on the EA ended December 29, 2014; and the comments were addressed in the EA. Protests on the FEIS have been resolved, and a Findings of No Significant Impact as part of the Record of Decision was signed on January 23 by the DOI Assistant Secretary, Lands and Minerals. The Record of Decision served as both decisions for the EA and FEIS. Interior Secretary Jewell held a ceremony in Albuquerque on Saturday, June 24 announcing the signing of the ROD.

### **Southline Electrical Transmission Project**

The Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Southline Transmission project is undergoing administrative review with a Final EIS publication anticipated in the Spring 2015, and the Record of Decision expected by Fall 2015.

The Southline Transmission Project is a proposed transmission line designed to collect and transmit electricity across southern New Mexico and southern Arizona. Southline Transmission, LLC, proposes building a 360-mile line from near Las Cruces, New Mexico to Tucson, Arizona, crossing BLM-administered public land, State land and private property, in order to improve reliability of the electrical grid and facilitate renewable energy markets in the region. The Draft EIS was released in May 2014. Permitting for the project is being led by BLM New Mexico and the Western Area Power Administration (Western). The proposal is to upgrade an existing Western transmission line in Arizona.

The BLM and Western released the Administrative FEIS for internal review, including cooperating agencies, on January 7, 2015. The internal teams have 30 days to comment, which ends February 9, 2015. Shortly thereafter, the FEIS will then be published in the *Federal Register* for public review.

### **Southern Arizona Project (SAP)**

The Tucson Field Office is funding three interns on the Ironwood Forest National Monument (IFNM) and two interns on the San Pedro National Riparian Conservation Area (SPRNCA) to conduct border trash clean-ups and restoration projects to address border-related resource damage. These interns will be working for six to eight months each. Additionally, youth crews will be used for large-scale projects such as fence repair and large trash clean-ups. The IFNM interns will work together with the Tohono O'odham Nation crew on restoration projects near the IFNM and Nation boundary.

The Safford Field Office is funding a single intern to conduct border related inventories and assessments, and a youth crew to rehabilitate locations where vehicles have driven off road, repair damaged fences, and reclaim areas that are losing soil to erosion from illegal roads, trails, and damaging past uses. Contractors and youth crews will reduce fuels in a riparian area along the border in an effort to lessen the severity of border-related fires which have damaged riparian habitats in the past.

### **Tucson Field Office Ray Mine Land Exchange**

The BLM is moving forward with a Resource Management Plan Amendment and Draft EIS for the Ray Mine Land Exchange, with an expected release of mid-2015.

The Ray Mine Land Exchange effort proposes to trade approximately 10,900 acres of full fee and split-estate BLM-administered parcels adjacent to the ASARCO Ray Mine near the town of Kearny (Tucson Field Office), for 7,300 acres that are mostly located in Mohave County (Kingman Field Office). The BLM is working with ASARCO to analyze the exchange, in order to consolidate resource valuable lands, while simultaneously disposing of lands that are already heavily disturbed and laden with mining claims.

A change in land tenure from retention to disposal for approximately 9,700 acres is needed, so the project has been reclassified as an RMP Amendment and renamed the Ray Land Exchange/Plan Amendment. The Supplemental Draft EIS document is expected to be available for public comment by mid-2015.

Three public meetings will be held in Mesa, Kearny, and Kingman to solicit public feedback. The RMP amendments have added approximately four months to the schedule, but the analysis will cover a potential gap in the Supplemental Draft EIS.

Several components of the project are moving ahead. The Arizona State Historic Preservation Office has concurred with the BLM's site eligibility determinations in September 2014. Additionally, the BLM is working with environmental consulting firm SWCA to complete a Historic Properties Treatment Plan and a Memorandum of Agreement.

The BLM is striving to maintain frequent contact regarding this project with the interested tribes, through formal Section 106 meetings with line officers, project presentations, site visits, and responses to data requests.

### **Ripsey Wash Tailing Facility**

As a formal cooperating agency, the BLM Tucson Field Office submitted comments on a Draft EIS prepared by the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) that analyzes the impacts of the proposed Ripsey Wash tailings facility proposed by ASARCO, LLC. The USACE is the lead Federal agency responsible for the preparation of an EIS for a tailings storage facility for the Ray Mine, which is an existing open pit copper mine located in Pinal County, Arizona about 10 miles northwest of Kearny and approximately 65 miles southeast of Phoenix.

A Section 404 permit from the USACE is necessary because the Corps considers the Ripsey Wash drainage to be "waters of the United States." A BLM right-of-way grant is required for one portion of the project.

### **San Pedro Riparian national Conservation Area Resource Management Plan**

Progress continues on the development of a Resource Management Plan for the San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area (SPRNCA). The BLM is currently developing the range of alternatives that will be analyzed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The Draft EIS is expected to be released in late 2015 or early 2016 and followed by a 90-day public comment period. The RMP will guide management of the San Pedro RNCA for the next 15 to 20 years.

The alternatives currently under development will incorporate public and stakeholder input obtained during scoping and a series of community forums held during 2014. The management alternatives will be

presented to the public and BLM's formal cooperators, which include Fort Huachuca, Bureau of Reclamation, Cochise County, the Arizona State Land Department, Arizona Game and Fish Department and the Arizona Department of Sierra Vista.

The planning area encompasses the entirety of the 56,431-acre San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area, designated by Congress in 1988 to "conserve, protect and enhance the riparian area and the aquatic, wildlife, archaeological, paleontological, scientific, cultural, educational, and recreational resources" of the area.

### **Proposed Rosemont Copper Mine**

The BLM Tucson Field Office continues to assist the Coronado National Forest and the US Fish and Wildlife Service in evaluating the proposed Rosemont Copper Mine, located in the Santa Rita Mountains of Pima County, 30 miles southeast of Tucson. The USFS Coronado National Forest is the lead agency for the review of the proposal and preparation of all applicable NEPA documents. The USFS released the Final EIS and draft Record of Decision in late 2013. In response to issues raised during the objection process, the USFS decided to re-initiate consultation with the USFWS in order to fully evaluate the impacts to threatened and endangered species.

The BLM will be working closely with the USFS and the USFWS to provide relevant information regarding the potential impact of the project on the adjacent Las Cienegas National Conservation Area and the perennial waterways it protects.

### **Las Cienegas National Conservation Area Road Improvement Project**

The BLM Tucson Field Office is implementing a project to rehabilitate, resurface and restore 11 miles of BLM Route 6900, a major road within the LCNCA beginning at State Route 83 and ending at State Route 82 east of Sonoita. Once completed, the project will reduce maintenance costs and enhance access for outdoor recreation and other uses like hiking, horseback riding, camping and hunting. Visitor access from State Route 83 to the iconic Empire Ranch, a National Historic Site, will be substantially upgraded. The project is expected to be completed on schedule by March 15, 2015.

Upon completion, the 3-mile double lane portion of BLM Route 6900 from Highway 83 to the intersection of BLM Route 6901 will have a new chip-sealed pavement surface, upgraded cattle guards, a new concrete low water crossing and improved erosion control. The 8-mile single lane segment north of Highway 82 will get similar treatment, but feature a fresh aggregate surface.

Funding was secured through the Federal Highways Administration Federal Land Transportation Program. The road became eligible for Federal transportation funding with the most recent reauthorization of the Surface Transportation Act – Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21).

The 10-year Plan Evaluation Report for the Las Cienegas RMP is being finalized and will be presented in late January to staff and stakeholders. In February and March, the TFO planned two workshops, one internal and one external, to update the RMP Implementation Strategy. The Las Cienegas RMP was developed through an eight year collaborative planning effort that concluded in 2003. The RMP was approved on July 25, 2003.

### **Implementation of the IFNM Resource Management Plan**

The BLM TFO completed strategic planning for implementation of the IFNM RMP in August 2014. A major effort for 2015 will be the development of interpretive materials for a Titan missile site on the Monument. In partnership with the U.S. Air Force, the BLM will improve the Titan missile site to provide interpretation of the history and function of the site. This project includes maintenance of the ¼-mile spur road to the site from Johnstone Mine Road and installation of associated road signs and interpretive signage, highlighting the political, social and environmental conditions of the Cold War that lead to the presence of a Titan missile site in the deserts of Southern Arizona. The BLM finalized an Interagency Agreement with the U.S. Air Force, Civil Engineering Center on October 23, 2014.

Other implementation projects planned for 2015 include improved visitor information through the production and posting of maps throughout the Monument. The RMP for the IFNM was completed in February 2013 after extensive public and stakeholder input.

### **Black-tailed Prairie Dog Re-establishment Effort**

The BLM and the AZGFD have been working together to re-establish the black-tailed prairie dog on the Las Cienegas NCA since 2008. The species was originally extirpated from the state in 1961. One of the main components of re-establishment is the removal of mesquite trees that have invaded potential and existing colonies of the species. In FY 2015, the BLM expects an additional 145 acres of mesquite will be mechanically thinned to improve habitat for four existing colonies with help from a National Fish and Wildlife Federation grant. To date, the BLM and its partners have completed thinning treatments on 329 acres around two of the colonies.

To further increase chances for recovery of the species, the AZGFD, the BLM, and the Arizona Antelope Foundation are proposing to continue mesquite removal which will not only improve the habitat to allow for prairie dog expansion, but will also improve habitat for two other focal species in the Sky Islands Grassland Initiative, pronghorn and the Baird's sparrow both of which are compromised by the mesquite invasion.

### **Successful Events at Ironwood Forest, San Pedro River and Las Cienegas**

Several natural resource stewardship events were held to celebrate National Public Lands Day throughout the TFO in September 2014. On the IFNM, BLM and partner groups such as the Friends of Ironwood Forest, Tucson Soaring Club, Southwest Conservation Corps, Marana Heritage Foundation, and Arizona Wilderness Coalition welcomed a solid turnout for a day of volunteering. On the same day, events were held at the Las Cienegas National Conservation Area and SPRNCA.

Meet the Monument, an annual event coordinated by Friends of Ironwood Forest, took place on November 15. Presentations included photography walkabouts, botany, desert bighorn sheep, archaeology of the local area, and many other topics. Attendance was estimated at 250 people.

### **Safford Field Office (SFO)**

#### **Navajo County Grassland Restoration Project**

The SFO is moving forward with a key restoration program in Navajo County that will restore native grasslands and improve wildlife habitat for grassland species such as the pronghorn antelope. Environmental clearances for work on BLM-administered land were completed in September 2014. The first on-the-ground work began in the fall of 2014 thanks to a crew of veterans with the Arizona Conservation Corps, a statewide non-profit organization focused on engaging veterans and youth with

conservation work on public lands. The BLM's long-term plan is to treat up to 48,000 acres throughout Navajo County.

### **Aravaipa Canyon Permit System**

The SFO is in the process of converting the current online permit system for Aravaipa Canyon Wilderness to Recreation.gov, a national reservation site. SFO staff is currently working with a contractor on webpage content and development. Recreation.gov will provide expanded hours of operation and service compared to the current system while reducing workload on BLM staff. The current number of permits, 20/day for the east entrance and 30/day for the west entrance, will remain the same. Also permit fees will remain the same at \$5/person/day. The target date to start issuing permits with Recreation.gov is October, 2015.

### **Aravaipa Canyon Featured in Arizona Public Media Video**

Arizona Public Media chose a first-rate video as the way to highlight the unique attributes of the Aravaipa Canyon ecosystem, which incorporates a BLM-administered wilderness area and adjacent preserve managed by The Nature Conservancy. The video describes the ecological values of the area, along with a primer on how to visit. It can be viewed online at: <https://ondemand.azpm.org/>.

### **Paleontological Discoveries in the SFO**

The BLM received a letter from the International Wildlife Museum Director Richard White expressing his organization's excitement about the fossils found by Geologist Larry Thrasher during the 2014 field season. Over 280 specimens have been cataloged into the collections of the Arizona Museum of Natural History in Mesa, which has a permit for these vertebrate fossils from the beginning of the Ice Age (roughly two million years ago). The International Wildlife Museum was especially excited about a fossil porcupine discovered by Thrasher, indicating it was only the second and by far the best ever found in the state. The fossil came from a site that has yielded hundreds of small mammal teeth that can be used in stratigraphic studies of the fossil beds, comparing them to fossils from throughout the West and Mexico.

### **Coordination with the City of Safford on ROW, Water Supply Operations**

On October 1, 2014, Field Manager Scott Cooke signed the Right-of-Way (ROW) grant for the City of Safford waterline project. The project consisted of developing two potable water well sites on private land and construction of pipe across public lands in Safford, Arizona. The City is planning on starting construction beginning in November and it should take approximately two months to complete. The Safford Field Office (SFO) has started the process of working on the application for Graham County Electric; for the proposed ROW which will provide power to the city well sites as well as authorize existing power lines in the immediate area which have never been authorized.

The SFO is coordinating with the FWS and the City of Safford to talk about the City of Safford's Bonita Creek water supply, within the Gila Box Riparian National Conservation Area. The MOU between the BLM SFO and City of Safford is due to expire in 2016 and there is newly designated critical habitat along Bonita Creek. Re-initiation of consultation for the MOU and renewing the MOU with the City of Safford will be a high priority in FY 2015.

### **New Gila Watershed Partnership Executive Director Named**

As previously reported, the Board of Directors of the Gila Watershed Partnership accepted the resignation of Jan Holder as Executive Director effective July 3, 2014. The new executive director of the Gila Watershed Partnership is Steve Eady. While working as a geologist with Phelps Dodge Mining / Freeport McMoRan Copper & Gold Inc., Steve participated in creation of the Gila Watershed Partnership in 1992

and has been a partnership volunteer on restoration projects for many years since then. The BLM looks forward to working with Mr. Eady on issues within the Gila watershed.

**Phoenix District:** Mary D'Aversa, District Manager

**Hassayampa Field Office (HFO)**

The Hassayampa Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Environmental Assessment (EA) is currently out for 30-day public comment and when finalized will allow vegetation management within the Hassayampa Field Office in identified communities at risk of wildfire. This EA will not only allow critical hazardous fuels work to be accomplished in areas previously treated but will allow treatments to occur in new areas.

**Public Comments Sought for Statewide Herbicide EA**

On January 13, 2015, the Phoenix District office began public scoping of a proposal to allow the Arizona Public Service Company and Salt River Project (collectively the Utilities) to use herbicides in managing vegetation within their existing rights-of-way. The proposal is statewide and involves an approximate 954 miles of electrical transmission and distribution lines crossing BLM-administered lands in all four BLM Districts.

At the present time, the utilities are only allowed to use mechanical and manual operations to control vegetation within existing rights-of-way. Under the proposed action the utilities would continue to use non-herbicide treatment methods on a project-by-project basis but would apply herbicides to regrowth and seedling vegetation following initial manual and mechanical treatments. The Preliminary Environmental Assessment document has been posted to the BLM website at: <http://on.doi.gov/1z7i4cg> The BLM is seeking public input to identify issues to be considered in the EA during the public scoping period which will be open until February 16, 2015.

**HFO Issues Authorizations for Four Livestock Grazing Allotments**

The BLM has been working on the analysis of and authorization for livestock grazing on 12 grazing allotments within the public lands managed by the Hassayampa Field Office. The BLM recently issued final grazing decisions for five of the allotments, amounting to 37,073 acres of BLM-administered public lands, and will now issue grazing permits or leases for the remaining four allotments.

The BLM issued a grazing decision that went final for the Antelope Creek Allotment in the Spring Valley, AZ area. The BLM conducted monitoring of conditions on the allotment over several years, prepared a Rangeland Health Evaluation, sought public involvement, and published an Environmental Assessment. Following the analysis, interpretation, and evaluation of monitoring data, it was determined that land use plan objectives, allotment specific objectives, and Arizona Standards for Rangeland Health have been met on the allotment. The decision is to modify and renew for 10 years the grazing lease for the allotment, which amounts to 2,196 acres in size, 2,098 acres of which are federally managed for 50 cattle.

The BLM issued grazing decisions that went final for the Desert Hills Complex of three grazing allotments in the Wickenburg area. The BLM's three decisions were to renew one grazing permit and two grazing leases, including season of use restrictions on riparian areas, limitation on salt/supplement placement, and actual use reporting that will be included on the new authorizations. Range improvements include a seven mile pasture fence and riparian area enclosure fencing. The three Desert Hills Complex allotments include 26,895 acres of BLM-administered public lands.

The BLM issued a grazing decision that went final for the Turner Allotment, which is west of Phoenix, southeast of Tonopah, AZ. The BLM's decision was to not renew the 10-year grazing permit, and to re-

assess conditions for potential permit issuance in 10 years. The BLM determined that the allotment is not meeting Rangeland Health Standards. The most significant causal factor for non-achievement of the standards appears to be extended drought and historic grazing practices, including high sheep ephemeral stocking rates in the late 1980s, resulting in a lack of perennial grass across the majority of the allotment's ecological sites. The Turner Allotment includes 8,080 acres of BLM-administered public lands.

In FY 2015, the Hassayampa Field Office will complete six more grazing permit renewals including the Big Bug, Congress–Sky Arrow, Sky Arrow Complex (2 authorizations), JV Bar, and Cross Y Allotments.

### **AFNM Presents at the Society of Rangeland Management national Conference 2015**

The AFNM and Grand Staircase Escalante National Monument have been invited to present the results of BLM's Assessment, Inventory, and Monitoring (AIM) Strategy monitoring efforts on the BLM National Conservation Lands at the National Society of Rangeland Management Conference in Sacramento, California on February 5, 2015. In 2011, the AFNM was designated as an AIM demonstration area for the BLM. AIM terrestrial core indicators were collected in 2012 in partnership with The Nature Conservancy, the AZGFD, and many other public land stakeholders. The resulting information was used to collaboratively develop resource objectives related to grazing and wildlife habitat. Future goals are to use the AIM core indicators to monitor resource conditions and inform adaptive land management decisions as well as continuing collaborative partnerships. These case studies highlight: 1) how implementing the AIM Strategy supports National Conservation Lands mission and goals; 2) the utility of terrestrial core indicators for multi-scale grazing management decisions; and 3) the value of collaborative monitoring.

### **Wickenburg Community Travel Management Plan and Appeals**

The BLM will conduct a new analysis of travel management alternatives for the popular recreation area known as Box Canyon, which is about five miles north of Wickenburg. In May, the BLM finalized the Wickenburg Travel Management Plan for 101,600 acres of public lands surrounding the town. The decision to implement the plan seasonally closed to motor vehicles the 3/4-mile route in the Box Canyon riparian area in the Hassayampa River from March 1st to November 1st. The primary factors leading to the decision were: non-attainment of proper functioning condition of riparian areas, and non-attainment of standards 2 and 3 of BLM Land Health Standards. The Town of Wickenburg appealed the Box Canyon decision in June 2014. The BLM requested that the Interior Board of Land Appeals remand its May 2014 Box Canyon decision back to the agency in order to initiate a new environmental assessment on Box Canyon alone. On October 7, 2014, the Board agreed with the BLM's request, and set aside and remanded the Box Canyon decision back to the BLM, paving the way for a new public participation process. Until the new assessment is complete, the Box remains open and the previous decision to close it is nullified. The remainder of the 589-mile Travel Management Plan remains in effect and is being implemented. A new plan for Box Canyon will be jointly created with the Town of Wickenburg and the public over the course of the next year.

### **Lower Sonoran Field Office/Sonoran Desert National Monument**

The Lower Sonoran Field Office currently administers 11 active mineral materials operations, seven authorized under commercial Mineral Materials Sales Contracts, and four operating under Free Use Permits issued to County agencies. In addition, there is one currently authorized mineral material exploration permit. During FY 2014, about 1.2 million tons of material was produced from operations on public lands within the field office, generating \$693,000 in royalties for the U.S. Treasury.

### **Providing Customer Service in Minerals Permitting**

An EA for the Red Mountain Mining, Inc. (RMM), non-competitive mineral material contract application will be completed in the 2nd quarter FY 2015. The application is for the purchase of 445,000 tons of weathered granite to be produced from RMM's pit in Mesa, AZ, which they have operated since 1973.

Freeport McMoRan Copper & Gold, Inc. (FMI) – The firm's Miami, AZ mine complex is located within approximately 7,000 acres of land, of which only 227.4 acres is BLM-administered public land. FMI has in the past four years or so partially completed the reclamation of the Lost Gulch arm of the pre-1940s era Webster Lake tailings pond, which is comprised of about 75 acres of public lands, mainly located in T1N, R14E, section 13. Reclamation of the Lost Gulch area should be complete in 2 years. Active mining operations are taking place on only about two acres of public lands near the old Upper Oxhide Pit in T1N, R14E, section 34, which is part of a 65 acre leach pad, 63 acres of which is on Freeport's private land. FMI also has one building, and part of another, on public land in T1N, R14E, Sections 35 & 36. The company is in the process of completing an updated reclamation cost estimate for our review.

Global Resources, LLC. – The company submitted a notice modification in March 2014, for an exploration drilling program in the vicinity of the Buckeye Copper, Hargan and Idazona Mines along Agua Caliente Road, southwest of Arlington, AZ. The drill holes were completed and reclaimed in June 2014, and in November 2014. The company reclaimed all the access roads, trenches, and prospect pits created during their 2013 and 2014 exploration campaigns.

### **Two Grazing Permit Renewals Moving Forward**

The Hazen Shepard Allotment Permit Renewal Final Decision was not appealed, and the Walker Butte Proposed Decision was not protested and went final. Both permits will be fully processed by the end of January. The Maricopa Mountains Allotment Complex Land Health Evaluation was issued July 31, 2014, for a 15-day comment period. Western Watersheds Project was the only interested public to provide comments. EAs and Grazing Decisions for these allotments will be issued throughout 2015 and 2016.

Trespass livestock (cattle, horses, and burros) from the Tohono O'odham Nation and Mexico continue to be an issue on the Monument south of Interstate 8, on the Goldwater Range, and in Ajo. Interagency coordination between the BLM, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Park Service, the Air Force, and the Nation continues in order to find ways to stop the trespass. In 2012, 24 burros were removed, and in 2013, 66 burros were removed from the Ajo area. In 2014, no burros were captured, but significant progress was made toward mending the Nation's boundary fence.

### **AGENDA ITEM: RAC Questions on BLM District Reports**

RAC Members, State Director, District Managers and BLM Staff

Taylor: The Kanab North Mine, when they say it might be reopened; the last time when they left the mine it was left unprotected for 20 years. The protection cloths had deteriorated and containers were exposed. If they are planning on reopening a mine, there needs to be a plan to close it off until it is reopened. Also, the South Rim Mine can only be accessed via Havasupai land via the Navajo strip. So now we have the Russian Government purchasing the Vein Mine that has no legal access.

Taylor: I am a fan of the Agua Fria National Monument, but the roads are unbelievable. You cannot get to Pueblo LaPlata because of the bad roads. D'Aversa commented that things are still being prioritized due to the heavy rain damage last summer.

Shannon: Correction on report – Pending decision was not signed by Suazo; it was signed by the Secretary.

Hulen: What's happening with the litigation with the Ray Mine Exchange? Tim Shannon stated that the draft plan should be out in June.

Taylor: What is the story on the Ripsey Wash Tailings Facility? Is this a temporary storage facility until the mine is filled? Shannon said the Army Corps of Engineers is the lead on this.

Krishna Parameswaran: This facility will be around a few more years and will be reclaimed in place. In regards to reclamation, there are two programs dealing with this. There is also the aquifer protection program. If you are looking at older grandfathered mines, this would not apply. As part of the APP permitting process this will have a financial assurance.

Brake: Let's formulate a topic and create a working group and discuss this at another time.

Taylor asked if there is any cost recovery potential for acid contamination of Boulder Creek. Trost stated that the BLM has received Federal funds to remediate the project.

#### **AGENDA ITEM: RAC Committee Reports**

Energy & Minerals Report – Per Parameswaran, nothing that needs to be brought to the attention of the State Director.

Water and Healthy Lands Report – Per Quigley we had some discussion on Healthy Lands after Kelly Castillo's presentation. Random acts of restoration. Thought they could take a closer look at this before the next meeting.

Suazo stated that with June's help we can have a discussion at the next working group meeting.

Recreation and Communities – Per Sacher, the Recreation RAC committee discussion on the Tonto National Forest fee change increase. We did put a lot of effort into the process to make sure the Forest Service comes up with a good process to follow. The results were that the general RAC is in agreement that the Recreation RAC found deficiency in the Forest Service proposal. We agree that a reasonable fee is needed. Some of the problems identified in the existing proposal, is we think that their Public Comment Outreach in October 2014 was not adequate and missed the majority of the winter visitors, hunters, etc. We will recommend an additional comment period in June, July or August and that they (USFS) contact the user groups. No responses were received from the AZGFD so we will suggest they also be contacted. We also recommend that the Forest Service needs to identify main access roads to fee areas so that people don't have to drive to the end of the road only to find out that they should have a permit.

At kiosk fee areas, it is recommended that signs be posted at kiosks stating that fees are charged and where to purchase a pass. The Recreation RAC has requested to be on the next agenda.

The Recreation Committee met three times with the BLM Friends and Partners group. We came up with the purpose of the document, who BLM friends groups are, and went through the Arizona Strategies and identified the connection to Friends groups. We had several comments that will be presented after the State Director has seen the comments. There will be plenty of time to read and provide comments.

**AGENDA ITEM: Recognition Ceremony for Glen Collins (former RAC Member)**

Suazo: Today we are celebrating Glen Collins' time serving on the RAC. Glen's public service spans over 60 years. He has been the longest serving member of the Arizona RAC since it was established in 1995. He has been an invaluable advisor to the BLM from rangeland health and standards and guidelines, to development of a recreations strategy as well as the RAC protocols and processes, which we are still continuing to work on. He has been a steadfast contributor to the collaborative process and provided thoughtful advice and opinions. On behalf of the BLM Arizona State Leadership Team and past State Directors, I am honored to recognize Glen on his outstanding work as a member of the RAC. Thank you for your support and guidance of the RAC.

Collins thanked everyone for the recognition and said do not under estimate the importance of the RAC. I have known and worked with all of the State Directors in Arizona since 1965. I am honored to have been able to serve on the RAC and work with the BLM.

**AGENDA ITEM: Wrap Up/Future Agenda Items/Next Meeting Dates/Adjourn  
RAC Members and BLM Staff**

The next RAC meeting will be in June or July. A selection of tentative dates will be emailed to all RAC members as soon as possible.

Meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m.