



United States Department of the Interior
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Front Range District Office
3028 East Main Street
Cañon City, Colorado 81212



RIO GRANDE NATURAL AREA COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Rio Grande Water Conservation District Conference Room

March 13, 2014

ATTENDEES

Andrew Archuleta, BLM San Luis Valley Field Manager; Tom Heinlein, BLM Front Range District Manager; Steve Vandiver, Rio Grande Water Conservation District (Chair); Rio de la Vista, Rio Grande Headwaters Land Trust (Vice-Chair); Harold Anderson, Costilla County Rancher and Costilla County Conservation Board Member; Michael Willett, Conejos County Rancher; Craig Cotton, Colorado Division of Water Resources; Mike Blenden, Project Manager, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; Kyle Sullivan, BLM Public Affairs Specialist; Sandra Montoya, Rio Grande Water Conservation District Administrative Assistant; Charlotte Bobicki, Assistant to Senator Bennet; Brenda Felmlee, Assistant to Congressman Tipton; David Montgomery, San Luis Valley Ecosystem Council; Ben Doon, Costilla County Administrator; Lauren Krizansky, writer/editor; Sean Noonan, BLM San Luis Valley Outdoor Recreation Planner.

STEVE VANDIVER CALLED THE MEETING TO ORDER AT 10:00 A.M.

INTRODUCTIONS, REVIEW LAST MEETING, APPROVE MINUTES

At 10:10 A.M. Rio de la Vista moved to approve the minutes. Craig Cotton seconded and the minutes were approved unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Ben Doon commented on Costilla County's efforts to construct an interpretive sign at Labato's bridge. The county is also interested in interpreting the historic dam within the Rio Grande Natural Area. Costilla County is working with Sean Noonan (BLM) on a strategy for interpretive signs within the RGNA.

OPENING DISCUSSION

Andrew Archuleta and Harold Anderson provided an update on the abandoned and trespass horses within the Rio Grande Natural Area. The Human Society conducted a "round-up" of some of the horses. Rio de la Vista motioned to write a letter to the BLM Director encouraging impoundment of trespass horses. Craig Cotton seconded the motion.

REVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF THE DRAFT MANAGEMENT PLAN

The committee reviewed the newest Draft copy of the RGNA Management Plan. Section 1: Rio de la Vista encouraged the use of more subheadings. It was suggested that repetitive recommendations be included at the end of the document. All documents will be web-linked at the end of the document. Include RGNA Act in appendix for more concise document.

Section 2: Include names and position of RGNA members at end of document. Link to Rio Grande del Norte National Monument in appendix.

Section 4 was suggested for removal from document due to an unclear purpose.

Section 6 should include a link to the Rio Grande Compact. Also needed is a location map to provide a frame of reference. Discussion also centered around what to include from the fisheries perspective.

CADASTRAL SURVEY/BOUNDARY ISSUE

Randy Bloom, Branch Chief of Cadastral Survey for BLM Colorado, and Sean Hines, BLM SLV Cadastral Surveyor, discussed the boundary from BLM's perspective. The boundary in question is determined by legislative action. It is a legal description and not subject to multiple definitions. The commission requested a legal map by June 1st.

ACTION ITEMS

Email Sean Noonan your choices for the RGNA mark (logo).

AGENDA TOPICS FOR NEXT MEETING

Schedule time for the Commission to review and discuss recommendations in the Draft Management Plan.

Update on the feral and abandoned horse impoundment.

Malcom Albright presentation on boundary issue.

Discuss public outreach for RGNA plan.

SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Rio Grande Natural Area Commission is scheduled for June 12, 2014 at the Rio Grande Water Conservation District Office in Alamosa, Colorado.

MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 3:25 P.M.

/s/ Andrew Archuleta

Andrew Archuleta, Designated Federal Officer
Front Range District, Bureau of Land Management

Steve Vandiver, Chairman
Rio Grande Natural Area Commission