

**Southwest Resource Advisory Council
MEETING MINUTES
Friday, October 8, 2010
Ouray County Fairgrounds 4-H Events Center
Ridgway, Colorado**

ATTENDEES

Southwest Resource Advisory Council Members

Ken Emory, Category 1	Andrew Gulliford, Category 2	Jim Cochran, Category 3
*Kathy Welt, Category 1	Peter Mueller, Category 2	Gerald Koppenhafer, Category 3
Eric Sanford, Category 1	Andrea Robinsong, Category 2	Barbara Hawke, Category 3
Buck McGee, Category 1	Dan Morse, Category 2	Lynn Padgett, Category 3

Not present: Al Heaton, Category 1; Wally White, Category 2; Tony Gurzick, Category 3

*Arrived at approximately 1:30pm

BLM/FS Staff

Lori Armstrong, BLM, Southwest District	Brian St. George, BLM, Gunnison Field Office
Ron Duval, FS, SJPLC	Barb Sharrow, BLM, Uncompahgre Field Office
Jana Moe, BLM, Administrative Assistant	Edd Franz, BLM, Uncompahgre Field Office
Nikki Grant-Hoffman, BLM, McInnis Canyons NCA	

Visitors

Maureen Briggs	Bill Gleason	
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The meeting was called to order at 9:13am by vice-chair Andy Gulliford

New Southwest RAC members were introduced. The new members are: Buck McGee, Category 1; Eric Sanford, Category 1; Barbara Hawke, Category 3; Lynn Padgett, Category 3. Andrea Robinsong was reappointed for Category 2.

The agenda for the day was approved by all.

A motion was made by Andrea Robinsong to approve the minutes from the August 13, 2010, RAC meeting, seconded by Jim Cochran. Motion passed. New members Lynn Padgett and Barbara Hawke abstained as they were not present at the last meeting.

District Manager Report – Lori Armstrong

- White-Nose Syndrome
 - the BLM is close to making decision on what caves to close.
 - Check the link on the BLM CO webpage for updates.
http://www.blm.gov/co/st/en/BLM_Programs/recreation/White_nose_Syndrome.html
- Handbooks distributed to new RAC members.

- Budget
 - We will be operating under a continuing resolution until Dec. 3, 2010.
 - Under the Continuing Resolution the oil and gas industry will operate under old funding regulations, lease fees will not be raised.
 - The proposed budget for BLM will have significant reductions for FY 2011, ie The Challenge Cost Share program, a government matching program for partners, is completely eliminated in proposed budget. It still exists under continuing resolution.
- A question was asked regarding a proposed land exchange in the Gateway area. The DM has not studied the maps, and does not know if it impacts the Southwest District.

Science in National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS) Units – Nikki Grant-Hoffman
(Handouts Attached)

- Presently working on science plans for the National Conservation Areas (NCA's) in Colorado.
 - The plan for McInnis Canyons is complete
 - Starting on the plan for Gunnison Gorge National Conservation Area (GGNCA)
 - As science plan creates guidelines for scientists and managers to communicate on how to integrate and use science. The science plan is an implementation plan for science needs as determined by the RMP
 - Hopes to add a “Science” tab to the website this would allow for management to post a research request and also allow the public to see what studies are going on in a particular area.
 - Hope to have interns/AmeriCorp/etc. work on science projects
- Planning could help reduce conflict between public user groups and science/research projects
- NLCS science plans don't necessarily end at NLCS unit boundaries, Field Offices may gain from overlap.

Gunnison Sage Grouse – Russ Japuntich (Handouts Attached)

- Status review on Gunnison Sage Grouse – Warranted but precluded, level 2 as of 9/28/10
- RAC could encourage field offices to communicate better
- RAC suggested reconvening the Gunnison Sage Grouse Rangeland Conservation Plan steering committee. Subsequent to the RAC meeting, BLM Gunnison Field Office staff made this request through the Gunnison Basin Strategic Sage Grouse Committee. Colorado Division of Wildlife has agreed as the sponsor agency to reconvene.

Uncompahgre Field Office Resource Management Plan Revision, RAC Sub-Committee - Barb Sharrow

- Bill Ela was not reappointed to the SWRAC, but would like to continue on the sub-committee. RAC Category 3 needs a replacement as sub-committee representative.
- Lynn Padgett moved to expand size of sub-committee by one to allow Bill Ela to remain on committee. Andrea Robinsong seconded the motion. The Motion passed.

- Andrea Robinsong then made a motion to nominate Barbara Hawke as a replacement category 3 representative on the sub-committee. Lynn Padgett seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Wild and Scenic Rivers – Edd Franz, Gunnison Gorge National Conservation Area (see Handout)

- Good website to check out for Wild and Scenic River information: www.rivers.gov
- CCI – Colorado Counties Inc. – (63 member counties), requires local participation in land use planning (L. Padgett)

Southwest District Field Office Wild and Scenic Reports

Uncompahgre Field Office:

- San Miguel River: Peter Mueller, and the UFO RAC sub-committee, are working on a process to collect public input on eligible Wild and Scenic segments along the San Miguel River. They expect to hold public meetings in November/December. The sub-committee will make recommendations to SWRAC and BLM based on public input.
- Gunnison River: There are thirteen eligible sections on the Gunnison River. Consolidated stakeholder processes have been started for sections within the Dominguez – Escalante NCA planning area and the UFO planning area sections. The Gunnison River stakeholders are holding separate stakeholder meetings. There has been a big turnout for stakeholder meetings so far. The next meeting is October 12 in Delta. Stakeholder groups should be listening and working toward consensus.

Gunnison Field Office:

- During the 1990 Resource Management Plan process, one eligible segment was analyzed, but they did not identify any segments as suitable. They expect to do more structured analysis in next RMP revision.

San Juan Public Lands Center:

- Dynamic public input process with the Dolores River Dialogue
- A sub-group of Dolores River Dialogue is exploring special legislation to preserve ORV's and water rights.
- Preliminarily Suitable determination in draft San Juan Plan for Dolores Public Lands Office:

- Dolores River (109.02 Miles)
- Coyote Wash (7.6 miles)
- Summit Canyon (12.15 miles)

Public Comments:

Maureen Briggs asked Brian St. George for a status update on the Gunnison area geothermal proposal road closures related to Gunnison Sage Grouse. Brian stated that such would be covered in his field manager report.

Field Manager Reports

Gunnison Field Office, Brian St. George (see Handout)

- A temporary new BLM office will be located at 650 S. 11th St. in Gunnison. This will be a BLM only office.
- A 30 day public comment period will be starting soon for the geothermal EA.
- A question was asked by the RAC as to what role should the RAC have in the review process?
 - After public review Dan/Jim/Peter will collect and summarize comments from RAC members and draft a recommendation. A summary would then be presented to RAC by email for a poll and decision on formal resolution or informal notification to BLM.
 - As always, RAC members are encouraged to comment as members of the public.
 - Expect the EA to be available in the next couple of weeks.

San Juan Public Lands Center – Ron Duvall (see attached notes)

- BLM released the decision record for the Final Alpine Triangle Recreation Area Management Plan (RAMP) this week.
- LouAnn Jacobson, manager of the Canyons of the Ancients National Monument (CANM) retired as October 1. Heather Musclow will be the acting CANM Manager.
- They are presently accepting comments on a plan to give the property of the former Dolores District Ranger office to the Dolores school district.
- Upcoming climate change workshop in Silverton w/Mountain Studies Institute
- Annual Tribal Consultation meetings were held in partnership with Mesa Verde National Park.
- Managers traveled to Oregon to visit other Service First offices to figure out what can be done better in Service First operations.
- Beetle Kill Hit: “Beetle Kill Theater” took much of the money for FS seasonal work, but ended up getting most of it back in May.

Uncompahgre Field Office - Barb Sharrow

- So far there have been five Cooperating Agency and RAC Sub-Committee meetings for the RMP.
- IBLA upheld Dry Creek Decision. Implementation underway.
- Dominguez – Escalante NCA (DENCA) scoping meetings are complete, and we are presently holding recreation focus meetings.
- No appointments have been made on the DENCA RAC, still waiting for approval from Washington.
- DENCA plan alternatives development will be starting in January
- Energy
 - Redwine well pit getting cleaned up.
 - Working on EA’s with SG and FRAM
- Stimulus Projects
 - Solar project for UFO building not started yet.
 - Exterior improvements on UFO building project in the works
 - One unfinished resource project
 - Crews are still working on rehabbing the Sidewinder Trail area.

- GGNCA – Delta 6th graders Environmental Education day – Gunnison Gorge Anglers chapter of Trout Unlimited funded teachers and buses - 150 kids attended.
- WY field school at Lawhead gulch found recent looting at the site.
- Checked out a potential historic site on an extreme jeep trail, nothing was found.
- A Paleo intern in GGNCA this summer got a lot of surveys completed.
- Dry Creek Plan Implementation meeting Oct 12 at Hampton Inn

Meeting dates for next year:

- SuperRAC Feb 15 – 18 or Feb 22 – 25 end of week usually better, week of 16, 17, 18 preferred
- June 2/3 San Miguel, meeting in Norwood/Telluride
- August 25/26 in Crested Butte
- Oct 27/28 in Durango

Suggested SuperRAC Topics:

Alternative energy issues/geothermal/solar

River management issues

Wounded warriors group

Recreation management

Access/ATV use

Required training for grazing? BLM policy/regulation and issues?

Discussion/decision items as opposed to information

Public Input – get some

Climate change studies how many initiatives is BLM involved in?

Oil and Gas – interaction between BLM/state/Local regulations

Top 5

1 – Energy including renewable

2 – Recreation including access and river management

3 – Oil and Gas

4 - Climate Change

5 – Grazing

A motion to adjourn was made by Eric Sanford, seconded by Lynn Padgett. The meeting was adjourned at 4:04 p.m.

