

**Coeur d'Alene Resource Advisory Council  
Meeting Minutes  
May 31, 2012**

*Idaho Department of Health & Welfare Office  
1350 Troy Road  
Moscow, ID*

**RAC Members in Attendance:**

Category 1:

Jann Higdem, Linda Rider, David Brummer, Alan Harper, Kim Friend

Category 2:

Jackie McAvoy, Cliff Swanson, Jerry Shriner, Tom Crimmins, Kim Brown

Category 3:

Chris Goetz, Patty Perry, Keegan Schmidt, Dan Dinning

**BLM Staff in Attendance:**

Gary Cooper-Designated Federal Officer and Coeur d'Alene District Manager

Suzanne Endsley-RAC Coordinator and Public Affairs Specialist

Will Runnoe-Cottonwood Field Manager

Larry Kaiser-Supervisory Forester

Jered Spogen-Forester, Cottonwood

**Other Attendees:**

Scott Carlton - Congressman Labrador's Office

Mike Hanna- Senator Crapo's Office

Tommy Stroschein – Latah County Commissioner

Gary McFarland – Friends of the Clearwater

*Note to readers: A copy of each attachment listed in the text of, or at the end of these minutes, is on file with the official copy of minutes in the BLM Coeur d'Alene Office. Persons desiring to view attachments should contact Suzanne Endsley at (208) 769-5004.*

**Opening Remarks**

Linda Rider – RAC Chair called the meeting to order

Introductions – RAC Members, BLM Staff, Guests

**Miscellaneous Comments**

Linda shared an article about Quagga Mussels and wondered how the RAC could get involved.

Suzanne reminded the RAC about the nomination period expiring June 4, 2012.

Jerry moved the minutes from the February 22, 2012 meeting be approved; Alan seconded. All were in favor.

Several RAC members mentioned that the letters sent to the public regarding the Bally Mountain EA came in an envelope that wasn't marked BLM. Instead, it had an address for an environmental company so it caused confusion. Will Runnoe stated this was the contractor who prepared the NEPA document for the field office and he will talk with them.

### *New Business*

#### **Overview and update Cottonwood Field Office**

Field Manager Will Runnoe presented an overview of the Cottonwood Field Office projects and issues:

- Due to an asbestos issue the current buildings will need to be demolished because mitigation is extremely costly. Planned demolition for 2014. Currently looking at several alternatives for staying in Cottonwood: 1) BLM would like to maintain a presence in the community and rebuild. 2) Would like to avoid leasing. 3) May look at collocating with Clearwater and Nez Perce National Forests. 3) Also researching other communities including Grangeville and Lewiston.
- Big Horn Sheep: Finalizing the draft analysis on 4 allotments. Supplemental EIS Draft expected in July. Will go to the national and state offices for review August 1. Expect to release to the public this fall.
- Riggins Gun Club: City of Riggins would like to acquire 3 acres from BLM. Hazmat issues prevent BLM from developing. The congressional delegation is assisting and the BLM wants this to happen for the community. Mike Hanna stated it may be necessary to wait until after the election. Things are not moving quickly right now.
- OSU Field School Archeological dig: Begins the end of June through August 6. Located at Coopers Ferry along the lower Salmon River.
- Bug Slope ATV Site: expect to have approval site ready by this fall.
- Lolo Weir: working with the Nez Perce Tribe to install a permanent structure. Field office is completing the environmental analysis with construction planned for 2013.
- Land exchanges/acquisitions: the Field Office has three sites they are working on acquisitions or conservation easements. The Heckman Family property along the Lower Salmon River; the Heitstuman land near Pine Bar is being purchased by Western Rivers Conservancy with the intent to have BLM acquire in 2014 with Land and Water Conservation Funds (LWCF); and a parcel in the Craig Mountain Wildlife area that would block up BLM lands there.

#### *Questions/Comments from the RAC:*

*Kim Brown asked if the archeological integrity was preserved at the Bug Slope site? Will verified that the old area is closed off and preserved. There is fencing preventing use. The ATV club will take over management of the new area, whereas before the old site had little oversight.*

*Cliff Swanson asked if the Craig Mountain property is adjacent to Idaho Fish and Game land. Will clarified TNC wants to retain the China Gardens Ranch.*

Update on the from the RAC to the Secretary regarding fuels budgets: concerns that although the letter states that the RAC should work with local level (DM/SD) on the fuels budget. The BLM is moving to have dollars distributed at a State level.

### **Coeur d'Alene Field Office Updates**

Larry Kaiser, Supervisory Forester for the CDA Field Office, passed out a CDA Field Office Briefing Paper (Handout #5). Larry presented an overview and update on current issues in the Coeur d'Alene Field Office.

- Lower level sites are open. Snow is still inhibiting opening at higher level sites.
- Blue Creek Bay trailhead opening possibly in mid-July.
- Hazardous Fuels treatments in Shoshone County: Wallace Fuels Rx 90% complete. Mullan Forest Health EA this summer and Murray next year.
- Mineral Ridge planned Prescribed Burn: understory burn this fall, open houses/public meetings and letters/dialogue with Beauty Creek homeowners.

### Questions/Comments from the RAC:

*Kim Brown asked if it will be maintained at a transportation corridor? City will maintain this. Feels there should be public input due to the history.*

*Linda asked about the piece of track that went to Potlatch.*

*Historic concerns of the Wallace Forest Conservation Area. Does it have Nation Register status? The BLM stated that interpretive work is schedule for next spring. Kim stressed the importance of retaining the historic features of the area including the Mullan Road, the transportation corridor and the timbering activities.*

*Jann Higdem asked about the funding source for the hazardous fuels reduction work that the County is doing. Is there an oversight committee? She had a bad experience with a hazardous fuels reduction prescribed burn that the county did near her home.*

**Public Forum: Gary McFarlane of Friends of Clearwater present but had no comments. Kitty Benzar of Western No Fee Coalition submitted written comments to the Diana Jones and Margaret Gorski of the Forest Service.**

### **Recreation RAC Covenes:**

Margaret Gorski, Director of Recreation for USFS Region 1 and Dian Jones, Clearwater NF Landscape shared information about a FS regional look at amenities and activities. She shared a historical overview of FLREA in the Forest Service. R1 is lesser developed in terms of recreation. The budget for recreation is the lowest nationally. Goal is to try and develop a fee schedule based on amenities, use, etc. that allowed flexibility for adjusting fees incrementally. Tentatively REA may be reauthorized in 2014 which allows the FS to retain fees collected for improvements/management of the sites. Diana presented the CWF-NPF "Recreation Niche", value statement for the recreation program.

RFA (Recreation Facility Analysis) reading out to the public to hear what their wants and desires are for FS sites. The FS had developed a five-year management plan. Draft expected this summer.

**Steps:** 1) Completed inventory of financial data; 2) Developed a Forest Recreation Niche (need feedback on it); 3) Identify operational efficiencies (use, etc.); 4) Rank recreation sites; 5) Propose 5 year strategy; 6) Finalize 5 year strategy; 7) Implement site specific public participation.

*Tom Crimmins asked if private companies can come in/run and make dollars, why can't the Forest Service?*

Margaret Gorski replied that concessionaires are able to provide a higher level of experience. They have more flexibility to offer amenities and it's less expensive for them to maintain the Forest Service due to location, travel, etc.

Granger-Thye authority allows concessionaires to manage a campground, not REA. REA authorizes FS to collect fees.

*Kim Brown questioned why the FS, since they are the landlords, can't increase fees, but the concessionaires can increase fees. Concessionaires are unclear to the general public. Margaret replied that concessionaires are a competitive bid process, one tool that is used. These topics are what the FS is trying to gather.*

*Dan Dinning asked about the dollars Region 1 budgets for recreation. How are these divided out to the Forest? Can Margaret please provide this to Suzanne and she will send it out.*

*Jann Higdem asked if concessionaires have a ceiling on what they can charge. FS has to approve. First year is based on bid rates. 2-5 years can be readjusted.*

*Kim Brown asked where does the public come in on voicing their opinion about concessionaire fees? These are public lands. Diana will send RAC members an information sheet regarding RFA and how they can comment. Margaret will send distribution of allocations to Tom. It is hard to measure some of the workload.*

*Jann Higdem asked about ARRA funds to the FS. CWF updated accessibility, improvements, heavy maintenance and no new facilities.*

Linda Rider motioned and Dave Brummer seconded for the Recreation RAC to be adjourned.

**Other Discussion:**

*Kim Brown brought up the Wild Horse Program. She is concerned about costs of oversight in these lean times. She would like to see dollars freed up to manage lands versus horses.*

**Closeout**

Suzanne Endsley passed out 2012 nomination forms and remind folks that are interested to get applications in.

Kim Brown wanted to let everyone know it's the 150th anniversary of the Homestead Act. Some small structures could be on old homesteads, because the 12' x 14' structure requirement was not always enforced. This could indicate a homestead site. You can check sites out at

*Coeur d'Alene District RAC Meeting  
May 31, 2012*

GLOrecords.blm.gov for homestead records. If anyone comes across a homestead, maybe this could be shared at the next meeting.

Suzanne passed out travel forms to those claiming mileage. She let the RAC know that June 9th will be the grand opening for the BLM's Blue Creek Bay Trailhead and parking area. June 9 is also "Get Outdoors Day". All are invited to attend. This was built with a grant from Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation.

**Next Meeting Dates: Possibly September 18. Will determine based on need.**

**Meeting adjourned at 3: p.m.**

David Brummer moved meeting should be adjourned.

Chris Goetz seconded.

All were in favor.

Minutes recorded/prepared by: Suzanne Endsley

Minutes approved by: /s/Linda Rider

Date: August 27, 2012