

Central Montana Resource Advisory Council
Lewistown BLM Field Office, Main Conference Room – Lewistown,
Montana

March 6, 2012

Attendees:

RAC Members:

Category 1	Category 2	Category 3
Dan Kluck (<i>absent</i>)	Jason Birdwell	Kris Moser
Wayne Fairchild	Aart Dolman	Jim McCollum
Nick Schultz (<i>absent</i>)	Larry Epstein	Ron Poertner
Dana Darlington (<i>absent</i>)	Mary Jones	Clive Rooney
Mike Bryant	Hugo Tureck	Troy Blunt - Chairman

Designated Federal Officer (DFO): Stan Benes

BLM Members:

Stan Benes – Central District Manager, Mark Albers – HiLine District Manager, Kaylene Patten – BLM Facilitator (Facilitator), Mark Schaefer – Supervisory Outdoor Recreation Planner, Adam Carr – Supervisory Range Management Specialist, Gary Slagel – Upper Missouri Breaks National Monument Field Manager, Craig Flentie – Public Affairs Specialist, Zane Fulbright - Archeologist, Steve Smith – Rangeland Management Specialist, Cathy Barta – Fire Ecologist (Minutes), Mike Modlish- Administrative Officer, Deb Tucek-Realty Specialist, Mike Barrick-Range/Weeds, Jordan Thompson-(Acting) Safety and Occupational Health

Public:

1) Erik Vanderbeek, landowner in MT. 2) member of public brought letter for the RAC to review, regarding petroleum exploration- Handout written by Francis Zahler. Aart Dolman read letter from concerned public. (Donna Kramer author)

Public Comment Period:

Erik: has a handout for comments concerned with oil & gas development, wants to address weeds today, he's a landowner and has a concern with road development, he knows it's expensive, concerned with weed dispersal.

Letter from Francis Zahlev handed out- "Petroleum Exploration". **Aart Dohman** read letter from public: from citizens of the Missouri Rivers. Aart is a member of this board. – Concerns about fracking in the Madison Aquifer area, and agency approval of fracking. Board is concerned about the absence of the EIS regarding fracking in the Madison Aquifer. Requesting that the BLM halts all fracking until public has a chance to review EIS & comment. Donna Kramer, author of letter.

After public comment period, went around and provided introductions. After the introductions, Kaylene reviewed the agenda. Kenny Kever was listed on the agenda but will not be present for the weeds

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presentation- expecting a baby. He'll be listening via phone during the presentation to answer questions if baby doesn't decide to be born.

Kaylene reviewed the meeting notes from the last RAC meeting. No changes made to them and chairman signed, entered into the administrative record.

Troy Blunt provided synopsis: waiting for subgroups to provide info.
Stan Benes- nothing more to add. Eager to listen to the round table.

10:30 public comment period closed.

Roundtable Discussion:

- 1) What have you heard? *Also hot Topics for us to be aware of.
- 2) How are we doing?
- 3) What can be improved?

Stan Benes- reason why: to find out what the public opinions of the BLM are.

Mark Albers-helps us to figure out what's important.

Mary Jones- has had a lot of people talk. 1) Is Sage Grouse. Habitat quality is a concern. Fragmentation and Leeks are concerns. Fences and oil & gas are issues. 2) Trapping in the Monument. A trapper uses ATV and doesn't follow regulations. 3) Kudos to BLM for water rights presentation. 4) Fracking is an issue. 5) Land acquisition is very positive, schools can ask for more money. 6) Wilkes brothers buying large tracts of land for private hunting. 7) Drilling.

Art Dolman- heard similar things as Mary Jones mentioned. 1) Acquisition of land is favorable. 2) Drilling in the Monument-unclear where to go. 3) Choteau meeting he attended as a RAC member. - He listened to Don Justice give a great presentation on fracking. – He gave a lot of information. WE need more education to the public about potential oil & gas development and fracking. There's so much public concern over fracking. Eastern Montana has issues that he's concerned about with regards to oil development.

Clive Rooney-Antelope Coulee on the N. side of Monument involves 4 parcels of state land. 1) Sage Grouse is a big deal. A national strategy will be developed. 2) Monument water right- astute observation that derived it, minimal opposition 3) Land exchange.

Wayne Fairchild- 1) talked to outfitters about land acquisition on Missouri River-all favorable. 2) One time permits-had discussions with outfitters, came up with concerns-we will have next meeting.

Jim McCollum-1) Land exchange proposals in Monument. 2) Bullwhacker Rd access. 3) Sportsman concerned about state land disposal in the monument. What will be left? 4) Wilkes Brothers land exchange concerns. 5) Oil development on the Rocky Mountain Front.

Troy Blunt- 1) In Phillips County concerns with oil & gas development- concerns from impacts: law enforcement and housing issues. 2) Sage Grouse and potential impacts. 3) Keystone pipeline is a hot topic-disappointment because it was going to transverse county line- good revenue source (source). 4) Bison from Canada- not much interaction. 5) Ft. Belknap water compact- could have huge implications to BLM/Phillips Co. from land exchanges propositions. 6_ CMR & Monument Water Compacts have caused concerns to public.

Mike Bryant: Has some information he'd like to distribute to RAC regarding oil & gas development. Asked Chairman if he could pass out info- Troy: yes. Provided Handout regarding Fracking.

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Website: Frackfinder.org; Operators post their frack fluid composition, anyone can access. - Industry is not concerned with toxins getting into aquifer. The weak link is the tubing that contains the chemicals. Handed out a geologic map(s) of the Ogallala Aquifer. – Trying to inform RAC about existing pipelines in the Ogallala Aquifer. – As far as the Rocky Mountain Front is concerned, speaking as a geologic engineer, there's some potential there. Anything that does occur over there, there is no infrastructure there to support the development. "Landslide Butte" is the first reported production from Bakken up in Canada.

Kris Moser- 1) Ice Fishing a lot. Returning from Crooked Creek, had discussion with rancher. (Roger Peters) he provided a letter from Roger about his history of working with the BLM. Roger raises valid concerns about hunting/fishing in Montana. BLM should work with other agencies about these issues. 2) Judith Mountains-residents feel that if 4- wheeler traffic were restricted, the elk population would increase in the Judith's. Road development affects elk populations. They don't like noise in their spring, summer and fall habitat.

Hugo Tureck- 1) got a call from Governor's office to sit on Board of Outfitters for state. Observation, their public comment period occurs throughout the entire meeting. – Interesting interaction. 2) Local vet unhappy about oil & gas/mineral rights Locals don't know how to check out their mineral rights. He recommended the BLM first, then the state. – A real issue. 3) Bison issue: idea "When do you consider Bison "free-ranging" How much land does it take? Mixed feelings about it. 4) State Land exchanges- people are curious, but not necessarily negative. – Small parcels some in/out of Monument. 5) Land purchase: the BLM never approached the PN ranch. An agent approached, on behalf of the landowner, the BLM. When we consider new land, maintains permanently in public domain. 6) Access- where is it? Monument, how do we access with these land exchanges?

Ron Poertner- 1) Sage Grouse an issue. An article in FWS about endangered species Act. If any endangered species is endangered in "part" of their range part has not been sufficiently defined. Being looked at and redefined-will impact a lot. 2) N. Fergus County- Water Compact on Arrow Creek. 3) Private land acquisition. 4) Litigation of Monument RMP. 5) Land exchange- on internet, he found BLM's land ex. Handbook.

Jason Birdwell- 1) Wilkes brother land exchange – big concern. "Durfee Hills Land Exchange" his thoughts- in favor of a swap, it's managing for the betterment of the masses. More locals are not in favor of exchanging for something north of river. Should keep the land in the local area to swap.

Larry Epstein- 1) Timber Management and Wolf Dispersal (Westside). 2) Oil and Gas. – Mike Bryant a good resource for information. Pipelines are good for revenue. 3) Small towns may not be ready for an oil boom... – Cut Bank/ Browning is. – Liked T-shirt.

Hugo Question to Aart: You refereed to Eastern Montana as Lawless?

Aart- yes, not buying license plates, construction, human waste issues. It takes a community to make it work. Likened to Gold Rush. Rumors need to be cleared.

Hugo: There is lots of opportunity for local employment for small communities.

Jim McCollum- Comment on Mike Bryant's map about area devoid of development in the Sand Hills. – Break there would be a very big problem.

11:45 Break for Lunch

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Weed Presentation- Jordan Thompson, John Kautt, Mike Barrick and Kenny Keever via Phone.

Hugo Question: “What is the responsibility to the lessee on BLM Land?”

Kautt: Inform your County of your problem and we’ll take care of it.

Barrick: In Fergus County, we provide the chemicals to the lessee and ask them to spray.

Jordan-/Valley County Contact- in Glasgow 90% of the problem is in the Rock Creek area-mainly leafy spurge. 40-50 hours of helicopter time to treat area, and also use biological control. Eagle Creek is a success story for bio-control.

Mark Albers- Are plants gone or just suppressed?

Jordan- mostly gone, some are left.

Aart: What kind of chemical spray is used? Outside boundary: 2/40 and Tordon mixture used, in boundary we use only bio control (bugs).

Mike Bryant Question: What kind of bug?

Jordan- Flea beetle; can jump, not fly.

*Get copy of handout for presentation for weeds.

Barrick: (manage 8 counties for LFO-different than HiLine). We sign cooperative use agreements; permittees are provided a chemical and apply it. Allotments are monitored every 3-5 years. Have a sheep grazing study with Leafy Spurge in the Durfee Hills.

Larry Epstein Question- Does LFO use flea beetles?

Barrick- Yes, most insectaries come for the Grass Range area. Spring rains affected the access the areas. We use sweep nets to collect the beetles.

Aart Question: How many bugs are caught?

Barrick- Warm days 15 minutes time- 15,000 collected.

Mike Bryant- Is there a concentration in the Durfee Hills?

Barrick- We use mostly sheep in that area.

Jim McCollum- Now that the Wilkes brothers bought this land, are the sheep still going to graze?

Carr- We need to research that.

Aart- once bugs are collected, what does BLM do?

Barrick- material is run through screens to a sorter, and then packaged into paper, kept cool.

Mary Jones- you should invite RAC out to collect bugs.

Jim McCollum: When Leafy Spurge drops, do bugs disappear?

Barrick- no, but they move on. Bugs are more cost effective than chemicals.

Hugo- you are not creating new species, are you?

Barrick- No.

Kenny Keever for Havre Field Office via phone- Cover large area. Sullivan Bridge, Marias River. Marias-project for controlling Russian Olive. Used a reel for chemical application to stumps used “Remedy” product on stumps. Salt Cedar Removal- working with districts for education in hill County. Fort Benton- White Top. Bear Paws-Dalmatian Toadflax. In Monument by Safford Ferry, found Salt Cedar, and removed. Curly Leaf pondweed 2) Judith landing found Recreation- 18 sites annually treated. Russian Olive removal being worked on in BLM lands Phragmites (common reed) –populations introduced and increasing. Along river – native and introduced species can hybridize. Biological Control- Consortium in the works for the management of Russian Olive. – Looking to sterilize the plant, but not kill it, - still can be used as a shelter belt. Flea Beetles- inundate beetle release. Russian Knapweed gall midge for bio control. Education/Awareness- gather volunteers/seasonals for awareness and identification training – in the field. Youth Projects for weed management in the Winifred area. Little Sandy Campground-

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Russian Knapweed 2009-grasses getting re-established. Russian Olive tree with Purple Loosestrife- photo for awareness. Eurasian Water Milfoil has been identified in the Missouri at Fort Peak. – Working with Missouri River Conservation to plan for the future. Curly Leaf Pondweed found at PN. Already in the Missouri River. Biological Control being used in Missouri area.

Hugo- Has Diffuse Knapweed on Arrow Creek.

Keever- We don't have it in Monument yet.

Hugo: How successful is poison hemlock defoliating moth?

Keever- used to not think so, but very recently saw some success.

Hugo- Where do you get the bugs?

Keever: For poison hemlock moths, we might be able to help you this summer. Regulations increase, so it's complicated.

Kris- Is there an effective bio-control for spotted knapweed?

Keever- Seed head flies and weevils, what we have is encouraging, it's taken awhile to get here.

Kautt- for Phillips County/HiLine- 97% weed free. Biological control used. Ongoing projects, Zortman Weed Rode, Dry Fork Weed Wash.

Aart Question- 97% weed free - if you didn't do anything, what would happen?

Kautt- influx of dispersion from Valley County, Ft. Belknap etc. could happen in a short time.

Keever- 15% population increase annually. Require weed free hay and signs posted and enforced.

Problem around the CMR. Zortman weed rodeo-educational, last weekend in June, 30-40 kids, successful. Weed wash station at dry fork road- during hunting & archery season- coordination with CMR. Gave out information at the wash.

Hugo- What kind of seeds do you get? (from wash recovery)

Kautt- A lot of different; Zortman biggest problem area. Knapweed is the culprit.

Mike Bryant- Does CMR have an aggressive program?

Kautt- They are getting better. We use Range Monies for program. Milk River Cooperative- 525 miles long (Milk River CWMA).

Kris Moser- Is fort Belknap controlling well?

Kautt- Not doing well, but we are working to help them secure funding to help them.

McCollum- Is Milk River in Canada a problem?

Kautt- No- that's why we start at Fresno Reservoir.

Hugo- What did the letter that was mailed to Milk River landowners say about weeds?

Kautt- Just informative, asking for help.

Mary- What are the months of work for spray?

Kautt- May until a freeze or out of money.

Keever- Concerns on the horizon- 1) court ruling has put us on a permit system. We have to permit through EPA for anything on/ near water. 2) Individual employees can be held personally accountable. 3) Permit renewals. 4) Lewistown RMP will take resources away from fieldwork. 5) Funding decreasing from range dollars. 6) Need to be creative for funding.

Kautt- Milk River \$ is done through a challenge cost share. Other areas didn't have much. Can't spray, but can inventory.

Kris- With the money you have, you are doing a great job.

Kautt- It's the coordination with the counties that is helping to make this a success.

Kris- if there are people with concerns, how do they influence the powers that be to release money to make available for weed control?

Kautt- Talk to Congress let them know. Public, private, state.

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Keever- It comes from people like you to build grass roots efforts.

Troy- We appreciate the BLM's efforts in this. We wish all federal agencies were this good to work with.

Kaylene- I have the Draft Weed plan for Monument for RAC for review, if you would you like to comment, get comments to me by March 29th and I'll forward onto Kenny. Passed out the plan.

Keever- I need and want your comments to go forward. Announced the Tiber Float coming out, second/third week in June. All invited.

Stan Benes- Weeds are a big deal. He appreciates the RAC support.

Kaylene- requested comments by 3/29 from Keever's plan to her for compiling to get to Kenny.

Break

District Manager's Update

Stan Benes- Central District:

- 1) Day to day- Grazing, etc.
- 2) Sage Grouse Assessment, reviewing RMP's- all consuming. Going to start Lewistown RMP.
- 3) Land/Water conservation fund proposal- still have to go through public comment period.
- 4) Land exchanges- none, only 2 that we are talking about. -1- A lot in Fort Benton for warehouse storage of accountable equipment. 2-2 Pilot proposal discussions with Clive/DNRC –a parcel right on Missouri River in the Monument that we currently help care take for recreation.
- 5) Water rights/ Judith River & Cottonwood Galleries.
- 6) Water right/CMR refuge of 1936.
- 7) Cottonwood restoration taskforce on Missouri River. Looking at M.O.U., working with Bureau of Reclamation. Has to do with hydrology. Looking at -2- pilot project w/public to plant cottonwoods in certain spots, using a "stinger"
- 8) Upper Missouri River Final Report, available on web.
- 9) Fire season approaching.
- 10) RAC nominations-members "terming out" (5) District Managers do not choose the RAC, the Washington Office does.
- 11) Monument Newsletter- Highlights the work rangers are doing ongoing assessments – "Hot off the press" Stan Handed out.
- 12) Concerned with Recreation budgets, weeds, etc.

Mary Jones Question- What does Chad think of the machine?

Stan- We can plant cottonwoods or at least give it a shot. He's supportive, but would rather inform the public of the natural process.

McCollum- How many acres of N-Bar inholdings?

Carr- About 4,000 acres.

Stan- Assured them that there are NO proposals.

Aart- Cottonwood Region- Preferable approach is flooding, better survival rate.

Stan- you're right, but maybe there's room to try something.

Aart- Maybe info at visitor center for educational purposes.

Stan- we can do that.

Mark Albers- HiLine District-

-Comment on Cottonwood-success story. 1) HiLine RMP update- keeps going, light at end of tunnel. Looking at end of April. Had to do a consistency review for Sage Grouse Conservation. 2) Our preferred alternative has a controlled surface use in a priority protection area for Sage Grouse; we are waiting to see what they think. Getting a cooperator's meeting scheduled for review. Washington DC has 6 months to review. After the, it'll be ready for RAC to review. Brian Hawkett will take over NEPA after Majerus

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retires. 3) Staff changes- Glasgow-Pheobe Patterson/Field Manager. Lost hydrologist, other positions. 4) Access still an issue. Established an access board of directors. Still figuring out what that is should help with focus. 5) Western Watersheds found the HiLine and protesting grazing permits that are adjacent to the Monument.

Clive- how does the protest work administratively?

Carr- During protest period, we'll review and issue a decision. They can "appeal" that decision.

McCollum- Basis for protest?

Albers- NEPA adequacy, we have different avenues to process.

Poertner- Was that the 10 yr. Watershed Plan?

Albers- Yes, Beauchamp Area.

Troy- I heard in the past, western watersheds went straight to litigation.

Poertner- How do they get standing?

Albers- They asked to be notified of all action that go on.

Updates done.

Presentation for One Time Permits:

Mark Schaefer- "One Time Permits on the Missouri River" Wayne asked him to do a presentation on this. Provided a handout-One Time Permits. There is no limit as to how many One Time Use Permits we can issue. We can do as many as we want. Filming permits are issued out of Lewistown. There aren't a whole lot issued. Has an outfitter meeting annually, and this topic is always an issue.

Wayne as an outfitter speaking to this- He can't do a one-time permit on any other river. Why here? We don't see a lot here, but why is it allowed?

Mark- If you do a couple more trips, it would probably offset the difference.

Hugo- If a guy applies for a one-time use permit every year why doesn't he apply for a "guide permit"? Is he avoiding regulations by doing this?

Mark- No, same regulations.

Larry- Do one-time use permits exist anywhere else?

Mark- He thinks the intent is to let other outfitters have a chance to float.

McCollum- Do film permits go through the local outfitters?

Mark- Some do, some don't.

Mike Bryant- Who do permits come from on the Salmon?

Wayne F- the USFS.

Poertner- How do non-profit groups get permits?

Mark- We give them a non-fee permit, it's not for profit. Given under "organized group"- mostly schools. - Issued to be held accountable for their use of river. They may charge-but its cost recovery, not profit.

Hugo- So, if the film crew wants to make money, it's a permit.

Stan- So, we understand the potential effects, what would it take to change it?

Mark- It would take a plan Amendment. (RMP Amendment)

McCollum- A permit every year shouldn't be a one-time permit.

Mark- Were you on the public comment period, was this issue brought up during the RMP development.

Troy- What would be needed to change the permit? A RMP Amendment? – Yes.

Hugo- Is it in the Wild and Scenic River plan to allow for the permit?

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Mark- The Monument proclamation provided for the requirement for the permit.

Craig- The Monument RMP is the guiding document.

Kaylene- You could make a motion, but we don't have a quorum today. -Would be tabled until a Quorum.

Kris Moser- Can we propose it informally to District managers for consideration?

Craig- An amendment requires public participation and public comments.

Mark- RMP allows permits on a case by case basis.

Stan- I think you should say no if they are asking for a one time permit every year. It's not one-time.

Jason- I'm on board with Wayne with outfitters from other areas coming here, but not so with the film permits.

Good discussion, but unless we make a motion, we're not going anywhere.

MOTION: Recommend that the RAC proposes to the BLM to take steps necessary to restrict the issuance and use of one-time commercial river guide permits in the monument on the river on a case-by-case basis as outlined in the Monument RMP.

Wayne-Make the motion

Larry- Seconded the motion.

Kris- motion to table issue until tomorrow to see if we have a quorum.

Hugo-Seconded.

Consensus Achieved.

Larry Epstein- Fee's subgroup update.

Gary Slagel- spoke to the update, provided a copy of the plan to RAC. Developing the notice to post in the Federal Register. – Reason for fees are budget driven: vandalism issues at recreation site. Waste disposal @ Kipp=\$15,000/yr. (costs). Waste disposal @ Judith= \$7,000/yr. (costs).

Kris- Kipp, there is a fee charged @ Kipp. Waste generated is also produced by fisherman & floaters.

Slagel- We'll get the Federal Register out ASAP.

Stan- visited with lady from the "no-fee" coalition, wants to know why they are being charged a fee after they have already paid taxes.

Rooney- how do you know the money is not offsetting the budget and actually supplanting the budget?

Slagel- I've been assured it will supplement not offset.

End of discussion- no farther discussion on this topic at this time.

Judith Moccasin Travel Plan Update- Adam Carr, Matt Comer, Chad Krause:

Adam- Judith/Moccasin area travel plan was started in 2007, the LFO wanted to get the RAC's feedback on how to go forward. RAC created subgroup. Subgroup had 6 meetings.

The areas affected are: LimeKiln, Judith Peak, Collar Gulch, Moccasin Mountains and other different areas.

In 2008, the RAC subgroup provided BLM with recommendations. In 2010, Matt Comer was assigned to it. Presenting a proposed action to the RAC. Wanting to hear some discussion/feedback from RAC.

Matt- Presented maps. Maps are different than what's in plan because of additional data available.

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North Moccasin Map- emphasis is motorized use, more loop trails. If it's not posted, need permission. No formal access agreement. Red lines are proposed for closure.

LimeKiln- emphasis is non-motorized use; hiking, etc.

Mary Jones- If a private landowner allows for a period of time, doesn't it become public?

Larry-no.

McCullum- If he signs an agreement, it's a lease.

Carr- We aren't pursuing any agreements. If the private landowner doesn't allow, it'll be closed. Several other areas are going this same route. (also closed to landowner adjacent.)

Comer- There are lots of opportunities for easements.

Carr- Matt, can you cover basic designations.

Comer- 1) seasonal-for game, birds, habitat, etc. 2) Proposed new motorized. 3) proposed non-motorized. 4) open administrative. 5) Closed.

Jason- I see a parking area on top, are people going to be able to load down below?

Clive- he was part of travel group. There was a compromise. The moccasins would be motorized.

Mike Bryant- We did a field trip up there years ago. Where's the parking area?

Clive- How are you going to prevent the hill climbing?

Comer- Self policing, signage, education.

Clive- does BLM have an easement with Kendall Mine?

Tucek- DEQ has to approve their reclamation first, so we have a floating easement waiting for that approval.

Jason Birdwell- I'm a landowner, so access is across my property until other route is approved.

Carr- scattered ownership is a challenge to approach for access.

Comer- Judith peak area.

Bryant- Did the West Slope cut throat trout fair well after blow down?

Comer- yes.

Stan- Where are we at conceptually?

Comer- There are a lot of redundant roads, so there are some proposed closures.

Comer- we need to be able to sell it and educate people to the advantage of having a plan.

Bryant- Armell's Road- you can't go all the way through.

Comer- Closing the bottom, most is washed out.

Hugo to Steve Gilpatrick (member of the RAC subgroup) - Are you satisfied with what they are proposing?

Gilpatrick- yes.

Clive- I don't like the green road to state section we're (state) getting a lot of trespass ATV use in the New Year Gulch. Kelly McGill captured that concern. Those roads in the state section are closed today. – Crystal Cave is adjacent to this area, and a valuable resource which is currently closed to the public.

Comer- The cave is a valuable resource that we'd like to develop, but we need a cave management plan first and work through access issues before development.

Bryant- Is this public knowledge? Can I get a copy?

Carr- Waiting for your input.

Mary Jones- Likes the different designations.

Kaylene Question- Are you looking at scheduling meetings for the public?

Comer- yes, soon.

Troy Blunt- If approved, how long before the plan is revisited?

Comer- As soon as issues arises.

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Kris- How are you going to handle the trespass roads?

Clive- A plan won't make a difference, physical barriers do.

Carr- We need to educate the public, that's our biggest challenge.

McCollum- What kind of enforcement do we have?

Carr- One LEO and some work with the sheriff.

McCollum- you can also just put someone there to educate the public, takes time. The CMR went through that. **Clive-** Topography limits access from the north.

Maiden Road- Update from Chad Krause- because of the level of disturbance and public concern we are doing an EA for the road repair. BLM got emergency relief for federal owned roads. Fed. Hwy. Dept. will do construction and BLM will do EA. Have issues: ingress/egress for fire, recreation use, costs associated with repair. Schedule- 2012 summer: survey & design for repair, 2013 actually construct the road. April will be time for public scoping.

Jim McCollum- Ball park estimate?

Chad- several hundred thousand range.

Kris- Are you considering a "null fix" it got a lot of use even through it's not repaired.

Chad- There's public safety issues and I'm not comfortable speaking to that.

Kris- You should consider travel at your own risk.

Stan- Once there's a hazard known, we need to address it. Can't designate if that.

Mary- How many miles is the road to be repaired?

Chad- 2.7 miles. The lower ½ mile is essentially gone.

Troy- What funding source? Discretionary?

Chad- not familiar with their funding.

Troy- my experience is you never know when it's appropriated. Was wondering if funding was actually secured.

Comer- What's the next step before moving forward to the public?

Stan- Make a motion, have maps available for RAC to review.

Kaylene- No quorum today, maybe tomorrow.

Clive- suggest contacting the subgroup about the plan status.

Comer- we did that and invited them.

Troy- What's next Kaylene? Members of Category 3 stick around to strategize for next meeting.

Kaylene- 6:30 at Yogo for dinner. Also a team building exercise by all who attend.

Meeting Adjourned.

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Grizzly Bear Conservation Strategy- Presentation by Matt Comer:

Stan Benes- had a point to make, a correction to RAC application- a courtesy review is also sent to the Governor’s office for review, before members of RAC are selected.

Comer- Grizzly bears are recovering well and need a management plan to get de-listed. – BLM/FS been involved with recovery since 1975 when they were listed. –The process has started to propose de-listing the bears. –First step is conservation strategy, and to roll that info our RMP. Go through a 5 factor analysis: Threats to habitat, over utilization, disease/predation, and adequate regulatory, manmade factors. –Looking at travel management, veg management, and food storage.

Mary Jones- What is the habitat that is being looked at? Thus used to be on the plains.

Comer- We look at the population objectives and they are being achieved. It’s more a social tolerance, how well people receive them. They are doing well and expanding their range. Estimates come from Kate Kendall- USGS.

IDT Progress: almost done and ready for proposal. The standards talk to zones: zone 3 is where they are expanding into.

Bryant- Have you seen bears in Little Belts/Crazy’s?

Comer- It wouldn’t surprise me. They are moving a lot. Food Storage is going to be a big challenge. We have a crew installing a bear box @ Lowry Bridge.

Epstein: I heard something about a problem with white pine in the Yellowstone area?

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McCollum- The white pine is pretty much gone in the Northern Rockies and the bears recovered and doing well. They are very resilient.

McCollum- How much participation from Sue- happy groups during the plan development?

Comer- We are going above and beyond what is recommended; they should be pleased.

Aart- I am puzzled with this, what are we trying to do with this wilderness? Bears are part of it, humans are not. When humans go into the territory, there is a human risk. My wife is a social worker; maybe she can go there and teach them to be better bears. Is there any philosophy about humans in the wilderness?

Comer- That's a good question and something to look at. Education is the biggest thing. Bear spray is a good deterrent. We need to provide bear training.

Bryant- is there a tolerance in Zone 3 for the bears?

Comer- The further out you get, I imagine the less tolerant the people will be, but we haven't done a survey.

Poertner- Is delisting the whole range?

Comer- Yes, the entire Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem.

Mary- If the Grizzly is delisted; does it make room for the Sage Grouse to Be listed?

Comer- No, they are farther down the list. A lawsuit will force a decision by 2015.

Break for coffee.

Oil and Gas Fracking Presentation by Don Justice "Hydraulic Fracturing 101":

Don Justice is in charge of the minerals for 7 offices. He also has a trust responsibility for Indian Minerals: Rocky Boy, Ft. Belknap, and Flathead. Fracking is in the news a lot lately. This PowerPoint was developed for public meetings.

McCollum- Do they use the same well bore to conduct all the activities?

Judice- Generally, yes, but there is an area in the Dakotas that moves 660 ft. to drill a fresh well. Bakken Shale in ND is one of the largest oil discoveries since Alaska. As technology progresses, so does the potential for oil recovery. Hydraulic fracturing has been around 70 years, the technology is not new. It's drilling sideways. The technology is very accurate. In ND, no fluids are allowed to be stored in the pit, so it's trucked out and either properly disposed of or recycled and reused. It's pumped at extremely high pressures. It's repeated in stages. When pressures are reduced, the water is returned. Locally Fracturing occurring on the Blackfeet Reservation and eastern Montana. It's an environmental advantage to accessing vast stress of oil.

Environmental Concerns are plenty. Water is vital well integrity is the key. Surface casing, intermediate casing and cement bond logs are in place.

How do we know how far the fracturing is going? There are micro seismic evaluations of fracking occurring to track where the frack is going. Phones put into ground to monitor where frack is going.

Well integrity is important for water protection. All useable water zones are protected. Good Mechanical integrity- * issues that could happen: Leaks in/behind the casing strings; cement channeling behind production casing; insufficient cement coverage; leak through casing.

*conductor pipe

Surface casing

Production casing

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Clive- Who does that (bond log?)

Judice- the operator does that and is submitted to us.

Aart- What is the percentage of risk?

Judice- I'm not sure. The operator is ensuring the product is secure because of money involved, for their return. We are responsible for protecting the environment; we make sure that quality materials are used.

Stan- What are the consequences of failure?

Judice- operator is required to fix it. Extremely costly.

Stan- Is their license in jeopardy?

Judice- No, but they can't go any farther until it's fixed.

Bryant- We pressure test and x-ray casings to make sure they are good. Very costly to fix, so you make sure it's right.

Judice- Potential cross-threading casing at surface could cause failure.

Kris- Are there inspectors for this operation? Worried about the "bad apples" the potential is enormous and he wants to make sure no one messes it up and is keeping safe.

Judice- We are unbiased, and we inspect.

Hugo- How often are wells inspected?

Judice- During drilling we inspect and witness at least once during operations. Materials are reviewed for quality.

Hugo- What is the average life of well?

Judice- depends on formation.

Hugo- the integrity of the casing is meant to last how long?

Judice- not sure, but we require pressure testing to look for weakness in the casings.

Bryant- We have wells over 20 years old that we haven't had a problem with.

Poertner- If Fracturing was better than expected, what's the pressure difference?

Jason Birdwell- If fracturing has been going on for 70 years, what pollution has occurred in water?

Judice- With fracturing- no contamination has occurred. There have been instances of contamination with surface activities. There is a great deal of "risk" with fracturing and potential contamination. I'm telling you the risks. But our job is to reduce the risk by using the standards and inspecting and maintaining integrity of the casings.

Wayne- How long does it take?

Judice/Bryant- to go horizontal, it takes 28 days.

Judice- The Fracking fluids contains

*It's not super-secret, but most of these items are at your home.

The sand is not common; it's specially machined for the formation it's used for.

98% water & sand; 2% Acid- Friction reducer; surfactant; antibacterial agent; cross linker; corrosion inhibitor.

Judice- I'm not trying to minimize the risk these chemicals are a concern, but well integrity is the key.

Clive- How do you know fracking fluids are being disposed properly?

Judice- There's a custody sheet for fracking fluid tracking. Water is a huge concern. It takes a great deal of water and do they have the water right. Only 30-40% is recovered in most instances. Disposal is a concern. Have 4 methods of disposal.

- 1) Underground injection
- 2) Commercial disposal facilities
- 3) Surface disposal pits
- 4) Treatments/re-use

McCollum- These injection wells are already being used for oil fluids.

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Judice- That's right, these wells are stringently regulated.

Kris- What are the detection technology for ensuring oil will be discovered once well is drilled?

Judice- There is good technology with geologists looking at formation. There's another formation under the Bakken called 3 Forks and it's just as big. There are many challenges for BLM: recruitment, retention, permit approvals. Workload for inspections.

Bryant- The Bakken Formation is continuous and large. Contains 3 segments. The Bakken and 3 Forks formations are called an oil system Geologists have known it was there since 1951, but we couldn't access cost effectively until now. We have the ability for precision drilling.

Poertner- If you put 1,000 gallons of chemicals into water and only 30-40% of water returns, where is the rest?

Judice- Eventually it should return, some of it may stay in the formation.

Aart- Could you say more about BLM responsible for Blackfoot Reservation?

Judice- The BLM was made trustee in 1912 for the Indian minerals owner. BIA is responsible for surface resources.

Kris- Fergus County; potential in the future?

Judice- No, wells done on federal land yet, so he can't speak to it. All wells are done on "fee" lands. They are drilling for the Heath formation and nothing significant yet. However, a company has discovered enough to keep them interest in getting a lease for the potential discovery. Indications show potential only.

Bryant- Don's right, the geology of the Bakken is simple. In Fergus County, the source bed of Heath Formation (oil has migrated) is more complex.

Where is EPA/BLM at on the safety of fracking?

Judice- The department has proposed some regulations, brought industry and public in to listen to concerns. Our current regulations are not up to date with technology. Our new regulations will be posted in Federal Register and potentially in place by next summer. We are not looking at a moratorium.

Clive- How many on staff?

Judice- Have 13 from Dillon to Glasgow. Has a strategy he has to follow from Washington office for what production is occurring.

Break for public comment period.

Kaylene read 2 letters regarding Hydraulic fracking from Todd Lark and Melody Lark.

Eric Vanderbeek- Represent Madison Aquifer Alliance. Provided a handout for RAC to review. Wants to point out a few things regarding oil & gas presentation. Pointed out a core sample- Madison group is under the Heath Shale, which 4,600 ~ below and Madison is below that. It's hard for me to say industry is considering water. Water is very important to our community and it shouldn't be sacrificed for jobs/oil/gas. The complexity of geology in central Montana would be difficult to contain fracking fluids. Benzene is a contaminant that is carcinogenic that is used.

Brady Connor- Fergus Co. Weed Coordinator- concerned with fee amenity propose. Targeting the wrong users to pay for destruction of recreation areas. Fees will restrict access. A river fee he doesn't agree with. Personal use vs. revenue use is not equitable. Access is already an issue. As a resident, he's opposed to fees. Water itself is a state resource.

Brit Long- has a quick question to Mr. Bryant- What's that average duration of water application to the Grant?

Bryant- doesn't know, differ to Judice.

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Judice- doesn't know for sure.

Brit Long- Familiar with state permit process and is difficult to go through. Water is essential and we need to pay attention to this, large volumes of water.

David J. King- in Tribune, article about inspection and oversight of wells is just no happening. How is this inspecting occurring here? How many people are doing this? How often? Do you know?

Bryant- In ND we have the regulators that come out and witness our operations, we have required documentation we provide regularly.

King- During the 28 day drill period, how often is well inspected in that time?

Bryant- Difficult to say, they come when it's complete.

King- What are the risk factors, what the results of 1 failure, how horrific?

Bryant- Risk is nominal. We have corrective measures, quality materials/engineering and inspections.

End of Public Comment Period.

Epstein- We should not be reading letters to RAC, and this is not a question and answer period to RAC- just a comment period and should be kept to that.

Troy- Duly noted.

Aart- Inspection of wells is a legislative issue.

Category 2 Presentation- Hugo Tureck lead:

Mike Aderhold- The most profound decision for Grizzly Bears occurred in 1985, to respond to grizzly bear encounters hired a person to respond immediately to educate people about co-existence. In 1995, DOI determined the need to get a group together to discuss issues- called the 'RAC'. He was one of the first members.

Picked 3 Topics about wildlife conservation- (former wildlife biologist) never encountered a person not interested in wildlife. Montana ranks first for people willing to travel to see wildlife, 2nd for fishing license, 3rd for hunting. In general 3 types of hunters: 1) food for table 2) sport hunter- competitive 3) natural hunter –from Keller. Some people view wildlife as pets- animals that need their constant assistance. Some people view wildlife as predators. Wildlife has several values and people associate with these values. Values should be considered. Sometimes this trips us up. The health of a country is tied to energy, and every man, woman, and child is connected.

2nd Item- Never encountered a government entity that should afford its road system. We now have 4 million miles of paved roads. Cover 1% of country and affect 1/5 of the environment. Biggest problem to wildlife. Montana's road system: 51,410 miles of road in MT. This affects wildlife by fragmenting habitat.

3rd Item- Endangered Species Preservation Act 1966. First list had 76 species. In 1989, the Act was amended, to include USFWS to include how much \$\$ is used related to endangered species. Provided handout. (1,381 list 20122) The majority of money is spent on the first 100 species. The approach needs to be changed. Instead of individual species, we need to look at large landscapes. Large landscape efforts need to be our priority for preservation. The Sage Grouse Initiative is approached like this and has landowner support. This is our future. Prioritize wildlife areas that are important need to be identified and preserved for our future.

Mark Good- MT Wilderness Association- public lands established 1958. Our focus is federal PowerPoint- "Montana's Prairie Wilds". With wilderness, we tend to associate with mountains, but more and more

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prairie landscapes are becoming more popular. With wilderness landscape, wilderness is a part of the multiple use landscape. In the BLM, there's only 6,000 acres of wilderness with the 3 million acres of wilderness. There's proposed wilderness approx. 158,000 or so, but there's not much. The point is wilderness is a small part of the landscape. Wilderness Act (1964) and FLPMA authorized BLM to inventory for changes to the landscape, are occurring, will happen quickly. Wilderness has a variety of uses- hunting, recreation, plants, wildlife, and recreation. Within wilderness livestock grazing is allowed use in some areas, more flexible than people assume it is. Keeping public lands like they are in his opinion takes a designation for preservation for conservation values. For some people, they don't want to limit development. They night sky is increasingly becoming more valuable. Some people come to E. Montana for the history but don't know how to get there. Put together a brochure. Evelyn Cameron museum in Terry, MT. Geo tourism is increasing, local culture can be shared. Book put out annually called "Wilderness Walk" which is free to the public.

Hugo-Medicine Rocks- paved the road coming in and it's getting developed. On first RAC we worked on a number of difficult issues: standards & guidelines for grazing.

Mike Aderhold- That was one of the first tasks. Then another important issue was noxious weeds, 3 Watershed plans, several ACEC's, prairie dog management, ORV issues, and Crow Res. Boundary issues. "The Quest," a book about energy development that people should check out; 20% of energy used is tied to computers.

Hugo- Gloria Flora on the Rocky Mountain Front put a moratorium on oil & gas – (back in the day). This RAC found consensus with her.

Water Compact Judith River & Arrow Creek - Chad Krause:

Chad- Montana is going through adjudication to see how much is there and available.

Negotiation Session- tomorrow 1 pm at Yogo meeting for water compact commission.

UMRBNM- Federal Reserved Water Rights Proposal- The proclamation of the Monument (2001) reserved rights to support the Monument, but doesn't say what that is. That's where discussion comes. How much cottonwood is on BLM? – We are trying to manage flow conditions for the cottonwoods to be established/maintained. Historic water table need to be maintained, cottonwoods need the stability. Went to Judith & Arrow Creek to determine flow needs. Want to maintain periodic flooding that historically occurred. Want to maintain shallow alluvial aquifers. In stream Flow Request: * 160 cubic ft. CFS- Judith *5 CFS- Arrow Creek 3/1-7/31. Arrow Creek will typically dry later in July but cottonwoods are surviving it. Why would BLM request something that exists? -to maintain our needs. Judith 1990 CFS/ Arrow 457 CFS- available water.

Montana water law mentions water reasonably available for development. Why is the development cap larger? Gives less opportunity for cottonwood development. We prefer big storage like Ackley Lake. Don't want a dam across any river. Storage reservoirs greater than 15 acre feet should be placed against the cap. Smaller reservoirs would be exempt from cap. Wells greater than 35 gpm in the Madison Aquifer would be against the cap. Chad's document is available on-line.

Poertner- Is the BLM request the same as Fish & Game?

Chad- 2 parts, yes and no. Our need is independent and concurrently requested.

Poertner- Isn't concurrent the same right?

Chad- Time establishment of right first is first. Older use thumps newer use.

Jason-Rumor that CMR is looking at something similar for the Musselshell?

Chad- I can only speak that they are looking at the same process.

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Mary- Ackley Lake have more than 1 user?

Chad- Yes, Ackley Lake has a lot of users; a lot of them contracted users. Has older water rights.

Stan-CMR Water Meeting- March 15 @ Yogo Inn.

End of Presentation.

Kaylene- We don't have a quorum, so a recommendation cannot be made. *One Time Permits & *Judith/Moccasin Travel Plan.

Larry- Doesn't this just roll to next meeting?

Kaylene- Some of these such as Judith/Moccasin Travel Plan if RAC doesn't provide comment, Adam & Matt will go forward for public comment because of time deadlines.

Troy- Amenity fees would come back to river?

Slagel- Yes.

Hugo- If no quorum what use is our opinion for Judith/Moccasin Travel Plan?

Adam- It is still helpful. We can go forward to the public.

Kaylene- Can make a recommendation, but not a decision.

MOTION: Move to make a recommendation for the Judith/Moccasin Travel Plan to go forward with the preferred alternative for the Judith/Moccasin Travel Plan to the public. The RAC supports the subgroups recommendations to the BLM and the general concept presented at the meeting today.

Byrant-made the motion.

Hugo- I second the motion.

Consensus achieved without quorum.

Kaylene- Larry gave her comments on weed plan; she needs all comments by 3/29.

Stan- Closing comments- Thanks to Kaylene for facilitation. A couple of river trips planned an invite to the RAC.

Kaylene-Mike Barrick sent an invite out for flea beetle collection in July.

Bryant- RAC nomination deadline? March 12th.

Next Meeting Dates:

Date: June 20-21, 2012

Time: 10-5:30 pm; 8-12pm

Location: Malta, MT

Public Comment: 10:00 am (both days)

Presentation- Category 3

Social: Troy will coordinate.

Field Trip- (optional)

Kaylene went over next agenda items:

- 1) Judith/Moccasin Travel Plan preferred Alternative
- 2) One time permit recommendation
- 3) Fire program / Cooperation / Risks

RAC Meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

**Central Montana District
Resource Advisory Council
June 20-21, 2012
Malta, MT**

Wednesday, June 20th

Members present: Mike Bryant, Jason Birdwell, Hugo Tureck, Jim McCollum, Larry Epstein, Ron Poertner, Dana Darlington, Aart Dolman, Dan Kluck, Mary Jones, Wayne Fairchild, Troy Blunt, and Nick Schultz.

Absent: Kris Moser and Clive Rooney

BLM Staff: Stan Benes, Stanley Jaynes, Kaylene Patten, Richard Adams, Geoff Beyersdorf

Other agencies/organizations: Maia Aageson, Agricultural Liaison Senator Tester; Brian Martin, The Nature Conservancy.

Agenda Review: 1) Round Table discussion 2) Judith Moccasin Travel Plan 3) Greater Sage-grouse RMP 4) Gilmore Cabin rental 5) One time river permits 6) Homestead Activities 7) Judith and Arrow Creek water rights

1) District Managers update 2) Fire Program/Cooperation/Risk 3) Public Comment 4) Category III Presentation 5) Agenda and Travel Vouchers 6) Optional tour of Zortman/Landusky mine site

Meeting Notes: No changes approved and signed.

Roundtable: What have you heard? How are we doing? What can be improved?

Mike Bryant: Haven't heard much. After float trip heard positive comments and has shared with other how the BLM is managing the monument. Oil and gas prices are down, some estimates that next year oil will be down to \$65/bbl. This will curtail drilling if this occurs, currently at \$84/bbl. There has been a steady decline in oil prices since early January.

Jason Birdwell: He has been hearing about the possibility of a land exchange for the Durfee Hill in-holding near the Wilkes brother's ranch. He would like to hear a good explanation for the ringing of the trees in the North Moccasin Mountains.

Jim McCollum: Questions on the land exchange with the Wilkes brothers/BLM also. Heard that BLM has already signed off on a deal and the Wilkes brothers bought the Robinson (Anchor) ranch.

Stan: Confirmed that the Wilkes did buy the Robinson ranch.

Jason Birdwell: People are not opposed to a land swap but would like it to be close to Lewistown and know what is being exchanged.

Hugo Tureck: Sits on the MT Board of Outfitters and is seeing tension between sportsmen and outfitters. He has some sense that BLM is caught in the middle. Sportsmen feeling like they are losing access throughout the state, and outfitters want to provide opportunity to users and be able to make a living.

He had a group that climbed Square Butte last week and appreciated having the place available to climb. Several expressed to him that they like how BLM manages the area for primitive use.

Met with some people from the MT Wilderness Association who were mountain biking in the area, he asked them if there is a conflict with other user groups. The group told Hugo there is a conflict because people are there for different experiences. As RAC members they need to take into account the reasons people use resources. Resources are important to people in different ways and how do RAC members take this into account?

Larry Epstein: Cut bank area concern is that big oil companies are pulling out. There is pressure from the tribe and environmental groups on how they are producing. Had a great day on the river trip, the Judith River area on down is definitely worth seeing.

Nick Schultz: The biggest thing is water rights. Both the CMR/BLM are after water rights. American Prairie Foundation is tearing out reservoirs. Tearing out reservoirs will impact wildlife and leave only birds. The other thing is government restrictions. Beef and grains are at an all-time high. Increased numbers of people are going into food banks. If agencies restrict producing food it affects consumers. One small example is EPA being so focused on dust on the roads and it impacts farmers.

Ron Poertner: In north Fergus County there is a rumor of a lottery system for floating the Missouri river. Wanted people to know about the river rescue on the Missouri. A gentleman fell into the river and floated 8-10 miles downstream. People called from the Stafford Ferry for help. The Winifred Fire and Rescue had a boat donated from BLM that they were able to get into the river to assist with the search. Search and Rescue is important for communities and they appreciated BLM's ability to support them through equipment. Adding searchlight for night rescue operations would be helpful. The communication with the Border Patrol helicopter could have been better. From a safety net standpoint it would help to have more infrastructures on the river. Woodhawk Sunshine bridge needs attention. There is a washout on the slab and a slump in the bridge. On the north side of the road there is a spring in the road that is causing a mud hole and people are getting stuck.

Aart Dolman: 1) Agrees with Hugo on differences people see in the environment. Heritage Act presentation in Choteau there were 300 people present. This reminded him of all the public demonstrations that occurred with the Monument. 2) Fracking issue in Great Falls, there are concerns on what it does to social system in a community. PBS series on fracking has a good example on social impacts. Water rights will become an important aspect on this. 3) BLM river trip he would prefer canoe/kayak. He learned a lot about the restorations to the homestead cabins and that they are open to the public. Good insight on what life was like back then. Wanted to thank the crew for a fantastic trip.

Dana Darlington: Concerns that the RAC is "window dressing", the perception in the communities is that BLM is going to do what BLM is doing anyway. Going through the Monument situation 12 years ago it is hard not to believe that that is the case. Think there is room for everyone to get something out of public lands (oil, recreation, grazing etc.). BLM deserves credit but so do private landowners. It would be nice to see at the end of the day that we've (RAC) accomplished something. Hopefully higher ups to listen, doesn't want to be viewed as window dressing to the public. Protect land and manage for future generations. New challenges for BLM every day. At some point we have to ask are we trying to manage too much rather than focusing on what's there.

Dan Kluck: Dana/Nick covered a lot of his concerns. Stick with common sense. Can't change things overnight. His grandparents put up a lot of work to get where we are now and he doesn't want to lose it.

Mary Jones: There have been several meetings in Lewistown regarding oil and gas development. The mayor from Sidney gave a presentation and people are hearing that it will come to the area and what to be prepared for. Madison Aquifer and drilling/fracking in the area has the potential to impact this aquifer. Local community has formed the Madison Aquifer Alliance to protect this resource. Bison and wolves are always an issue. Water rights meeting for CMR in Great Falls. These water rights commission meetings the people don't understand are geared for the Commission to help the public.

Wayne Fairchild: Outfitter meeting in Ft. Benton recently, only four out of 18 members attended. Meeting was pretty short and no major issues were identified. Mark Schaefer is doing a great job. The one time permits was discussed and he told them it would be on the RAC agenda. Impressed with the homesteads on the river trip. Liked the style of fence being use at Hideaway for recreation/camping. Liked the fact that the BLM staff got out on the river with the RAC members.

Troy Blunt: 1) Bison is a big issue especially with the recent translocation and the rumors of free roaming being allowed in BLM/CMR. MT Fish and Wildlife set a sour note with landowners and they are many landowners are talking about getting out of Block Management. 2) Water rights- the compact with the FT Belknap tribe would give the Grinnell Notch to the tribe and transfer state land out of the reservation. Notch (BLM) would be transferred to the tribe. This area is used by locals for recreation. 3) Keystone pipeline keeps going then not going. This will have an economic impact to county and there are concerns about whether it will go or not. Natural gas is huge to the county. Supply has risen above demand and prices are dropping. Talking about shutting down 250 wells and laying off ten employees. This would have a large impact to the local economy.

Go Backs:

Hugo: In response to Dana the people he met with at Square Butte respected and admired ranchers. They are really trying to understand rancher's perspectives. The group he visited with saw agriculture as a critical part of the environment.

Larry: Mineral research in Valley County shows it to be mostly natural gas. Seeing wells being shut in due to the Bakken influx.

Mary: In response to Nick, food production is now shifting to corn/soybeans to support the gas industry. Do ranchers drill shallow wells rather than reservoirs for cattle?

Nick: the government provides subsidies and inflates corn prices. Wells cost ~\$35/foot and need power, reservoirs are much cheaper. Cows put on weight better with water from a well as it is cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter, but wells are also 6X more costly.

Aart: Always like agriculture. The Rescue Mission and Salvation Army are having hundreds attend and use their facilities. Need to be concerned with the Farm Bill/SNAP and its impacts to agricultural communities.

Troy: Shutting down wells has impacts on revenue streams (royalties) to county infrastructures and thus county budgets. This can sometimes be up to 30% of the counties revenue.

Mike: Tester has introduced legislation to cede the Notch?

Troy: Congressional bill-yes. Land that was once used primarily for recreation would go back to the tribe causing conflict.

Jason: There is common consensus that federal agencies decide before public input is received. Not so much the case with BLM but with FWS/FWP. Hope that BLM continues to remain above that.

Ron: 1) Small communities really depend on the outside sources of income. 2) Brinks acquisition gave BLM a black-eye. When it comes out that the appraiser appraised it for 2-3X its worth, LWCF came up with funding, when the EA came out the public already sees that it's a done deal. When there is a holding company and funding is committed then the BLM is not being up front with the public.

Hugo: Tribal issues are almost us versus them and it shouldn't be. Anyway we can get input from the tribes. We are missing that component. It is difficult to get their input, and it would be nice to get tribal government input/representation on the RAC.

Mary: Need to keep in mind that the Robinsons is private land and they can sell it if they want.

Troy: Nick mentioned APF has breached reservoirs. APF put on their website. Questions on the use of 310 permit and if they had to do them after the fact. APF now know they need to follow the regulations like everyone else.

Travel Management Plan-Geoff Beversdorff

The Lewistown Field Office shared the following: The Plan is running behind schedule and staff is working on finalizing the alternative analysis. Staff hopes to have a draft ready for public comments at the end of September. In addition a correction to the previous meeting regarding the definition for those roads involving public/private lands. Instead of using the rationale provided for the Butte FO, Lewistown will identify those roads on private lands which provide access to BLM lands as "landowner permission required".

Mary Jones: Question on whether the North Moccasins will be identified as motorized and the Judith's as non-motorized. Geoff conveyed that is what would be moved forward in the environmental assessment but the final for the Travel Management Plan would still look for public comment on motorized/non-motorized use for those areas.

Greater Sage-Grouse RMP update-Geoff Beversdorff

Geoff conveyed some of the background for why BLM is conducting a RMP amendment. BLM is focusing on those areas where they would impact Greater Sage-Grouse or their habitats. These areas include ROW's, Grazing, Fire, Transportation, and Renewable Energy. BLM would not be addressing oil and gas leasing within this focused EA due to the protest decision.

BLM has been contacting cooperating agencies to set up a meeting for mid-July. The following agencies have signed MOU's with BLM to take part in the planning effort: Judith and Fergus county commissions, Chain and Indian Buttes Grazing Districts, MT FWP, FWS, NRCS, and the Forest Service.

The timeline is for a draft EA out in October 2012 and a Final Decision/FONSI in October 2013.

Ron: Had a question on the Monument revision meeting the FWS criteria. Geoff shared that they had been through the Consistency Review process and would be doing a briefing to the Regional Team in July. At this point it was not anticipated that the Monument RMP would need to be revised to address Greater Sage-Grouse.

Jim: Questioned whether the FWS would be providing input/comment before the Washington Office review. Geoff shared that FWS was involved at several levels in the GSG amendment process including the Regional Teams.

Ron: Asked if the LFO staff are seeing any impacts to grazing by this review? Geoff shared that we had received guidance from Washington thru IM-2011-43 for all programs on how to address potential impacts. The BLM State Office is showing FWS what is already in place and working with NRCS on the Sage Grouse Initiative.

Troy: Questioned the status of the Hi-line RMP regarding GSG. Geoff/Stanley shared that the Hi-line is moving forward and there would be a presentation to the Regional Team in mid-July.

Ron: Wanted to know if BLM in MT was similar to Wyoming by identifying and protecting core areas. Geoff shared that this idea has been brought forward in regards to utilizing ACEC's, but there were concerns about using ACEC's to protect individual species and whether this was appropriate.

Gilmore Cabin Rental – Zane Fulbright

Proposal: To convert Gilmore Cabin to a rental cabin. Put in wood flooring and windows, constructed 4 sets of bunk beds (sleep 8), kitchen table, chairs, fire ring, benches.

Presented a brief history on the background and process for fee proposal. (Handout for RAC members)

Zane had public comment (1) from Big Timber: There has been a significant amount of improvement, and should charge \$20-\$30 per night.

Mary: Asked about a journal notebook. Intent of the fees would be to remain at the site for restoration.

Aart: How many people can stay in cabin? (8) What is maximum length of stay? (14 days)

Dana: Would you charge grazing permittees? How do you regulate who stays? Zane: Permittees for administrative use would have no fees. Zane will look into working with permittees to make the cabin available for hunters.

Aart: Any cleaning process? Zane: Those who use the cabin are responsible for cleaning it. Recreational staff would maintain it on a schedule.

Troy: How do you monitor payment? A reservation system.

Aart: What prevents me from renting the cabin, then subleasing it, making a profit? Zane: The price is \$30.00 per night regardless if one person or eight people use it.

Hugo: Suggests limiting the cabin during hunting season. Zane: We can have a hunting season option.

Mike: What is public access now? Zane: Visitors must get permission from private landowner or access the cabin from the river side – about a 5-6 miles drive.

Dana: What do you estimate for yearly revenue? Zane: I don't know. Dana: Is it worth it for the BLM to monitor? Or use an honor system? Zane: Does it cost more to administer than we will gain in revenue, should we lock the door, etc. All good questions. Revenue currently is all hearsay. People from all over Montana use, but how much, we do not know. In 2009 – 1,000 vehicles per year but mix of Robinsons, permittees, hunters, etc.

Jim: How do you access the cabin? Zane: Gave directions, using the map to illustrate.

Stan: Forest Service does cabin rentals. Most people do not know it exists. Perhaps 2-3 thousand per year could go back into site.

Hugo: Friends of the Monument setup a website to encourage the public use. Forest Service has also seen greater public use. If BLM were to advertise would likely see more public use.

Mike Bryant: Build it and they will come. Rented a 2-story cabin on Flathead @ \$65/night w/max 3 night stay.

Troy: Legally, can we charge for something we currently don't have legal access to?

Dana: BLM has to look at it similar to private landowner, it's a wonderful resource but if large numbers of the public use it, it will get damaged.

Nick: Any research on volunteer system vs complicated reservation system? Zane: No.

Jim: If you leave it up to the people to donate, how do you control the use if you are going to charge or have it available, you ought to know who is in it. Administering a reservation system, BLM is already doing. There are some BLM in western Montana.

Hugo: Any research on vandalism in Forest Service? Zane: Don't know, a little bit at Crystal Lake. Mostly slob, not vandalism. One way or another we will have maintenance.

Mike: If set up for donations, won't be able to recoup maintenance. Zane: Maintenance costs likely lower.

Motion:

*Nick: Motion to make Gilmore Cabin a rental with the RAC recommending where fees go – no second – Failed.

*Aart – Moved to accept proposed plan for cabin rental; Larry: Seconded the motion. Failed.

Nick – Not discussing where the money goes will dump it down into bureaucracy hole. Doesn't mistrust locals – more concerned with long term money allocation.

Mike: What's the difference at Kipp between what is collected and maintenance? Zane: \$25-\$40 comes from comparable Forest Service cabins.

Dana: At some point would public demand certain amenities. Open yourself up to public demand. Big believer in honor system (coffee can).

Jim: How does BLM track designated site and track it back to its source. Kaylene: CBS Central Billing System tracks it.

Hugo – Could you add amenities do you have to do on impact statement? Zane: Yes

Larry: Forest Service renting cabins NE Flathead. No one has asked for improvements in 30 years. This won't get as much use.

Motion:

*Aart: Motion to amend: funds be allocated for upkeep first then to other recreation sites. No second-Failed.

Mike: Would need 64 nights rental to meet maintenance fees. As much as you can do to make it self-sustaining would be good.

Ron: I understand local fees go back to local entity. Stan confirmed this isn't an issue.

Jim: At what point are fees decided? Zane: RAC can make a recommendation. Turned down because wanted to comment on what fees would be.

Ron: What is status of road? Dana (others) needs to be very fair weather.

Jim: Once you make a payment there is no refund. Doesn't matter if you can't access the cabin. Smith River is good example.

Larry: Echoed Jim. \$25-\$40 is low end on what weekend costs.

Mary: Doesn't matter where it is, your money is gone.

Jason: Making a mountain out of a molehill. BLM only wants to recoup some maintenance costs.

Motion:

*Nick: Motion: Move to accept plan at \$25/night with reservation system; Larry: Seconded motion.

PASSED – Consensus approved.

Aart: Would hope BLM would include statement on rain and passible road system. Zane: Would know before making a reservation.

One Time Permits on River

Wayne: For river outfitters (18), there are twenty three permits available. Right now any outfitter can show up and conduct commercial business. Eighteen struggling businesses, why are we allowing other non-local outfitters to come in? Outfitters would like to amend RMP looking for RAC support to get non-local permittee allowance out of UMRBNM when it comes up for revision. RAC to restrict issuance of one time permits on case by case basis as currently allowed in monument RMP.

Mary: How much is a permit? Wayne – \$0, outfitters can't sell permit. Pay 3% of gross receipts to BLM

Wayne: State of Montana doesn't license or regulate outfitters. Outfitters feel they are local, supporting local communities, paying taxes. Taking business away from locals if non-local can come in and conduct outfitting.

Troy: Only river in Montana where this is allowed? Wayne: Wild & Scenic River, no other operations in country where non-local outfitter can do this.

Brought back to off the table from the past meeting for discussion – PASSED.

Discussion

Dana: All outfitters pay BLM permit fee. As law, what would non-local pay? Wayne: Same as local outfitter.

Wayne: feels there is enough opportunity for local people. Growing interest. Want clients to come to existing local outfitters, rather than coming in with non-local outfitter.

Hugo: Big thing that has come in is local knowledge contributes to safety. Wayne: Yes and stewardship.

Mike Bryant: Agreed with Wayne. Forest Service in Gallatin had excess # of outfitters. What umbrella does your business license fall under?

Wayne: Montana doesn't regulate recreation outfitters.

Larry: Of the twenty some license outfitters, some are from out of state. Wayne can contact local outfitter and set up for them but can't sub lease or charge.

Hugo: Five more available, Wayne is asking that no more permits be available.

Dana: As I understand this motion they can do without messing with RMP

Motion:

*Aart moved and Larry 2nd: Motion to recommend that RAC propose to BLM to take steps necessary to restrict issuance and use of one time commercial river guide permits in Monument on the river on a case by case, as outlined in the Monument RMP. PASSED with consensus.

Homestead Activities – Zane Fulbright

Commemorating 150th Anniversary of Homestead Act.

- Poster display
- T-shirts
- Photographer took pictures of those on public lands – bookmarks/postcards.
- Pride & Perseverance DVD
- Central Montana Preservation Board – chamber of commerce, library, getting together and deciding how to commemorate, celebrate
- Window displays
- Library
- Chokecherry Festival - National Traveling Exhibit
- Montana history conference
- River trips – RAC, Hagadone, Nelson
- Wartzluft/Gilmore/Cable restoration
- Historic Resource Commission – Hal Stearns
- BLM Art contest – Jr./Sr. High in Central Montana with Homestead theme
- Websites – BLM Homestead, Homestead records
- Fish Wildlife and Parks Service – National Homestead web
- Montana Preservation Alliance – statewide website
- Traveling Roadshow – Rotary/Kiwanis
- Central Montana Fair – posters, T-shirts, GLO press, postcards
- National Preservation Board River Trip Hagadone, Ervin, Nelson
- Contacted by descendants – Wartzluft, Great granddaughter ; Hagadone – Grandson

Aart: Several families on HiLine are descendants. Anyway they can contact them? Zane: Montana Memory Project.

- Funded graduate student to do research on children of Homesteaders

Hugo : Helena area in 1970s recorded interviews with homesteaders

- National Register nomination for Ervin Cabin

France Hagadone was BLM first Homestead site

Heartland – Rip Torn – filmed south of Snowies

Judith & Arrow Creek Water Rights – UMRBNM Water rights proposal-Chad Krause

State of Montana deals with federal reserved water rights through Compact Commission. Last three in negotiations are Monument, CMR, and Salish-Kootenai tribe.

A quantity of water in Judith and Arrow Creek sufficient to fulfill the purposes for which Monument is established.

Proposal goals: Support recruitment and retention for forests

A.) Protection peak flow, frequency and magnitude

B.) Support alluvial flow to secondary channels

Base Flow Water Right

160 cf/sec on Judith

5 cf/sec on Arrow 3/1 – 7/31

Limitations on Junior Water Right

Mainstream storage (Judith and Arrow)

Ramped Diversion 20 cfs/day (limited to 20 cfs/day, so its “ramped”)

Idea of a cap raised public concerns. BLM spoke with DNRC to look at risk of cap and future development. Between the 2nd and 3rd compact commission meeting BLM dropped cap.

Aart: Working with utility water rights and seriously underestimated Great Falls consumption (impacts to seasonal peaks)

Chad: BLM looking at working DNRC to maintain Feb/Mar and May/June seasonal peaks.

Could only divert 20 cfs/day, so 140 cfs diversion would be over seven days

Simpler water right, protected flow conditions

Base water rights only apply to those who come in after 2001.

Jason: Does BLM/FWP each get 160? No, just in-stream flow value, not irrigation (non-consumptive)

Aart: Great Falls lawns/toilets- consumptive use is very different than non-consumptive

*BLM trying to support flow conditions to support cottonwoods

Current level water use is high, more being used at base flow than is available.

BLM dropped at enforcement request

Ground water was counted against cap became contentious as BLM had to look at how/if ground water connected to system – BLM dropped with cap

Aart: Question on Marias/Teton River being dry in August and contributing to the Missouri. Chad this only applies to Judith/Arrow Creek.

Ron: Phrase on maintaining biological, did that remain? Chad: Proclamation will focus on cottonwood

Adjourned at 4:45 PM

Tour on 6/21/2012 will depart at 1:00 PM – Consolidate at Zortman Fire Station; Look at Wildland Urban Interface; Ruby Gulch; Zortman mine reclamation; Phillips – rural suburbs, weeds, fire, issues

Thursday, June 21st

District Manager Update
Fire Program/Cooperation/Risk
Public Comment
Category III Presentation

Members present: Mike Bryant, Jason Birdwell, Hugo Tureck, Jim McCollum, Larry Epstein, Ron Poertner, Dana Darlington, Aart Dolman, Dan Kluck, Mary Jones, Troy Blunt, and Nick Schultz.

Absent: Kris Moser, Clive Rooney, Wayne Fairchild

BLM Staff: Stan Benes, Kaylene Patten, Richard Adams, Geoff Beyersdorf

District Manager Updates

Maia Ageson – Senator Tester Office

Farm Bill on Senate floor – debates finish today.

HRI505 Border bill passed House on Tuesday. Exempts Homeland Security from 16 federal protection acts

Aart: Would like more information. Maia will send.

Nick: Senator Tester gets most money from lobbyist? Maia: No

Mike: Questions on Grinnell Notch. Tester introduced legislation for land exchange. The tribe wants Little Rockies back. Would like details and reasons behind legislation. Maia will get.

Stan-Central District:

- Thanks for those that joined on river trip. Good opportunity to look at issues/projects. We aren't beyond agreeing with public opinion.
- Staff Changes: Dillon, Miles City, two on the HiLine, Monument. As of next Friday, Gary Slagel will retire. Good community member and family. Administrative Officer left. Jerry Majerus left three weeks ago. Public Relations, Craig Flentie, will be retiring soon.
- Pending litigation to Judge Hayden. New RMP Lewistown Field Office
- Land exchange – no land exchange proposal with Wilkes, but we expect one. Closed off 60K of land Bullwhacker would like to see access. (Wilkes bought the Anchor Ranch).

Stan's soapbox – Felt cattle were getting too much credit for resource damage. Contacted National Riparian Service Team. Did assessments on Upper Missouri. Need solid science to show ranchers are doing their part July 2010. End result that all our allotments are on an improving trend and meeting Proper Functioning Condition (PFC).

Nick: This year's budget? Stan: Pretty lean and flat. This is actually good news where others are being cut.

Nick: Where do you see NLCS? Stan: Putting an emphasis on NLCS.

Rich: HiLine District

- RMP draft shipped to Washington Office. Now on hold due to greater sage-grouse.
- Looking at reviewing Alternative B.
- July – Review in July with National Technical Team. If hit target, 2-3 months for draft to get out, if not, up to 12 months.
- Part of what is going on is what makes good habitat (% cover, understory). More related to Great Basin. Havre office is running baseline transects to how we characterize habitat – vegetation community description.
- Air Monitoring – huge gap on HiLine. Working with Dept. of Environmental Quality to establish a station south of Malta
- Personnel – Rich leaving – Glasgow Manager left. With budget having been unable to fill positions as quickly. Hydrologist position has been vacant since March. This job is a calling for most people; sometimes see better pay, less public confrontation.
- Zortman – Landusky issues with water quality and impacts on/off reservation.
- Water rights adjudication for Beaver Creek

- Second round of permits with watershed planning – Four protests by Western Watershed Association. One issued under Appropriation Act. Withdrew decisions and will look at reissuing this winter.
- Forestry – Bighorn sheep meadow restoration
- Antoine communication site – thinning area
- Great Falls Office helping North Dakota Field Office with Bakken. Currently dealing with workloads through Strike teams. Technology is helping with permit process.
- Oil & Gas nominations – 54 lease parcels, most will be deferred
- Pine Beetles – pheromone patches in campgrounds.

Once RMP finalized RAC can help with implementation.

Nick: What happened with ACEC's and SG? Rich: felt propose management would address same concerns so ACEC's not needed.

District Manager Update-HiLine (Rich)

Nick- RAC could have had more involvement with RMP

Ron- did HiLine have to inventory for wildland?

Rich- Wildlands is off the table, did have to look at lands with wilderness characteristics. Looked at 90 units, came up with 20, looked at them and most didn't meet size, solitude criteria ended up with two for inclusion in RMP.

Steve Knox- Fire Season Outlook 2012

Rob Smith- NWS Glasgow. Factors that influence fire severity- spring moisture, summer temperatures.

HiLine moisture above average, temp below normal. Drought monitor- SE MT is drier. Verified Red Flag warnings 34 to date. From 2005-2007 averaged 13.

Precipitation above normal (Glasgow/Malta). Southern MT very dry (Billings 4.36/2.48). Models predicting more of EI Nino, probably drier 2012 similar to 2006/2009 eventually a weak EI Nino if continue to see rains like last 4 weeks, should be okay. Thoughts on 2012: 1)Neutral summers can be hot/dry. Looking for Normal. Chances exist for above normal for SE MT, but confidence isn't high.

1999-2011 average 13 448 K acres burned

2012 looking at 200K & with 30K already burned.

Troy- Due predictions factor in fuel load?

Rob- basically looks at temp/precipitation

Steve Knox- BLM Fire & Aviation

- Like to see fire where it naturally occurs. Better products coming out of National Weather Service evolving to see where Fire Program cans see positive/neg. fire behaviors.
- Division of Fire Management 1) Suppression 2) Dispatch Center Ops 3) Fire Ed. & Mitigation 4) Fuels management/Applied Fire Ecology 5) Aviation
- Central MT Fire Zone- Central & HiLine District

Fire Program Resources

- 5-300 gal. engines (3 person crew)
- 2-900 gal. engines (5 person crew)
- Exclusive use helicopter with helitack (9 person crew)
- Single engine Air Tanker Base
- Interagency operations
- Lewistown Interagency Dispatch services BLM, FWS, DNRC, FS.
- Zone Cooperators: CMR, FS-Lewis & Clark, Ft. Belknap and Chippewa-Cree Tribes, MT. DNRC- NE Land office, county fire dept., rural & volunteer fire department.
- Initial Attack Agreements with 9 counties. MOU's with Blaine, Phillips, Valley, Direct protection of the Big & Little Snowies for FS RFA/NA, other Federal grants- rural fire assistance/volunteers - provides equipment. Ready Reserve Program

Appropriate Management

Do what make sense
 Putting safety first
 Constantly evaluating cost v. benefit
 Working collectively with all partners & stakeholders

Dana- 1) What do you figure for controlled burn costs? 2) How many incidents where you burn beyond BLM onto private?

Steve- 1) Large block with aerial ignition \$20/acre. Some treatments can be 40/500 acres. For planning \$50 acre in grass, \$200 acre in WUI. 2) Malta- no escapes, Steve- had 1 prescribed fire go outside plan boundaries.

Public Comment: No members of the public present to speak

Stan- Review Proper Functioning Condition report from the National Riparian Assessment and if you have comments let him know. Looking to get Reserve Allotment. Lead Incident Management Team has gone from 10 teams to 5, need to be on road within 2 hours. FEMA trailers ICP, store, showers, and pretty impressive set up in a short amount of time.

Next Meeting/Agenda:

Agenda Sept. 18 & 19th in Lewistown 18th- 10-5:30; 19th 8-12:00 Public comment 10-10:30.

Category Presentation: Not at next meeting; may address later.

Topics: HiLine RMP draft update; Ft. Belknap water compact (Mark update on progress); Fire Season- fire mitigation education; Judith/Arrow creek water rights update- Chad; CMR CCP; Free Roaming Bison recommendation; Riparian Assessment Report- RAC thoughts; Land Exchange update.

Social: yes, coordinate an event in Lewistown

Category III- Brian Martin- The Nature Conservancy (TNC) Matador Ranch.

Grass Banking program: Grass As a Commodity.

Focus Areas in MT

MT Glaciated Plains, Bitter creek -> N. MT Prairies
 Crown of the Continent
 SW MT

MT Glaciated plains- encompasses
Matador Ranch 60K acres, 30 K deeded, 7K BLM
Conservation easements
CMR
American Prairie Foundation
Ft. Belknap Indian Reservation

TNC working with 13 ranch families on Matador Ranch
Community based organization
Primarily cattle, historically sheep
Herbivore, Climate, fire were primary ecosystem drawers
TNC major focus is grassland birds, doing worse than any other bird assemblage
Major factor is conversion of grassland to cropland
Breed in MT, Saskatchewan Alberta

N. Central MT has one of the top five concentrations of male greater sage-grouse
Black footed Ferret

Conservation Threats

Higher conversion in the N. Great Plains than Amazon
Every year losing look acres
MT Great Plains- 550K acres private
Grazing- some birds like heavy grazing other light. Need a variety of grazing (heavy-light) to provide
habitat for all bird suites (McCowan's long spurs-> greater sage-grouse)

TNC Conservation Strategy

Grass is good let's keep it. Use easements as a tool as possible. Work with and keep the managers of the
grass i.e. Ranchers.
Work with agencies to create new outcomes. Innovate, apply, and learn. Help grass managers better manage habitat
understand what that means to ranch operations.
*Don't expect something for nothing.

What is a grass bank? – Exchange or discount of forage for a conservation result.

Grass bank Operations

TNC manages Matador Ranch for ecological outcomes within the context of a ranching economy. Ranchers
are the cattle managers (health).
We work together on a grazing management plan and adapt during grazing season.
Communicate monthly. Livestock are run together in three herds. 2 cow/calf herds; 1 yearling.

Conservation Menu

Required

No Sod busting, Ranch management plan, noxious weed control.

Optional

Prairie dog acreage, sage-grouse leks & management, grassland birds “friendly” grazing management,
restoration project, wildlife friendly fencing & others.

Example of Grass bank bill

Yearling/cow/bull AVM's – 28,000

Discounts

Grazing management plan	1887
No Sod busting	4291
Weed prevention	741
Prairie Dog habitat	<hr/>
	11,000

Results

- 13 ranches, 2 beginning
- Total acreage 240, 203 (+60K on Matador)
- No sod busting discount 66, 029 acres
- sage grouse habitat 56,174 acres
- Prairie Dog 1,700 acres

Intangibles

- Test “wildlife” (yearlings) for Telonics new GPS
- Long billed curlew study
- Education-falconry

Final Grassbank Observation- why it works (people)

1) People are part of solution 2) share more in common than not 3) trust & familiarity 4) shared learning & understanding

Why it works (conservation)

1) Works at large scale 2) A place to experiment with low risk 3) Results are owned by all & more likely to be exported & applied 4) Builds the foundation for permanent conservation for some, shorter term for others.

Ron P- How does a typical conservation easement read?

TNC- You can't go out & radically change the land use (ranch stay as ranch)
Designed to strip conversion, strip mine, etc.

Mike- same types of ranches on Front?

TNC- No, base ops and working more to conservation easement. No larger grass bank.

Nick- What kind of comments do you get from public?

TNC- people want to make it work, hear good stories. Folks want to be assured that with grazing you can have a conservation outcome. Hard for public to understand that this is a long term project, people want to know that 10-20 years from now their money went to good cause

Nick- what do you do with Minerals & split estate

Along Rocky Mt. Front they are running into mineral development. Put side boards on mineral development-keep special sites by having habitat in place you can restore area once oil is gone. Need to strategize where to focus conservation easements; wouldn't place in Bakken, but S. Phillips county isn't likely to be developed, so focus easements there.

Meeting adjourned at approximately Noon and members met for the tour at 1:00 p.m. with Rich Adams as lead.

Respectfully submitted: Geoff Beyersdorff