

**RMP COLLABORATOR MEETING
SUMMARY OF ISSUES AND COMMENTS
DECEMBER 6, 2004 – MT DNRC, USDA – ARS**

Attendees

Dave McIlnay—BLM
Mary Bloom - BLM
Rick Strohmyer - DNRC
Eric Lepisto - BLM
Rod Heitschmidt – USDA ARS
Kathy Bockness – BLM
Jon Seekins – ALL Consulting
Karen Cantillon - Parametrix
Pam Gunther - Parametrix

In addition to the comments obtained from these agencies during the telephone interviews, the participating agencies offered the following comments.

Participation. DNRC would prefer to attend RMP Scoping meetings where other state and federal agencies are present, particularly FWP. Other agencies suggested for inclusion at future meetings were the Montana Board of Oil and Gas, the Department of Agriculture, and DEQ.

Local Comment. An attendee expressed concern regarding the value of local comments compared to national comments in regards to the RMP. The agencies wanted confirmation that their comments would carry more weight than comments from out-of-state residents who may be unfamiliar with local needs.

Collaborating Agency Commitment. Agencies were unsure how much effort would be required if they participated as a cooperating agency in the RMP. There were concerns about whether costs might be associated with agency participation.

Public Meetings. The agencies requested that the scoping meetings for the RMP be designed to diffuse animosity and encourage positive relationships with county commissioners.

Action Items

Rick Strohmyer, DNRC, wants Tom Richmond of MBOGC and himself to be included in BLM's RMP public scoping meetings.
BLM should prepare examples of good comments for the public meetings.
BLM should prepare an Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for DNRC.

**COLLABORATING MEETING SUMMARY OF ISSUES AND COMMENTS
DECEMBER 6, 2004 – USFWS (CMR NWR), GARFIELD COUNTY, GARFIELD
CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

Attendees

Dave McIlnay - BLM
Mary Bloom - BLM
Kathy Bockness - BLM
Eric Lepisto - BLM
Nathan Hawkaluk – USFWS CMR
Tim Miller – USFWS CMR
Julie Jordon – Garfield County Commissioner
BG Fitzgerald – Garfield Conservation District
Phil Hill – Garfield County Commissioner
Jon Seekins – ALL Consulting
Karen Cantillon – Parametrix
Pam Gunther - Parametrix

In addition to the comments obtained from these agencies during the telephone interviews, the participating agencies offered the following comments.

Cooperating Agency Meetings. People wanted to know when the meetings will occur and how frequently. They also wanted to know how the meetings will be scheduled over the RMP project timeline.

Private Development/Air Emissions. An attendee asked that the new energy projects be incorporated into the air quality modeling for the RMP.

Grazing. Garfield County raised grazing concerns, but did not expand on this issue further.

Access. This was also a concern Garfield County mentioned. They noted that illegal access cannot be avoided, particularly for hunters removing their take. Hunters seem to create problems when they illegally access private property. There are problems with accessing private land that is surrounded by BLM land. To obtain access into the National Wildlife Refuge (NWR), people cross BLM land, private land, and then enter refuge land.

Signs. Federal signs are frequently damaged. However, signs identifying property boundaries are still of value.

Advertising the Public Meetings. The Jordan Tribune should be contacted as the news media and posters should be placed at the post office, Hilltop Café, Ryan's Grocery, and Jordan Drugstore. BLM should associate the project with other cooperating agencies so the public realizes that there are many local and state agencies involved.

District Meeting. The next major district meeting will occur in May in the community of Circle. Attendees suggested that Circle might be a good place to come and talk to commissioners.

Public Meetings. The format for the RMP Scoping Meetings was discussed. Stations with staff attending them would be helpful. The meetings should be informal. A suggested location was the VFW, which requires a \$75 fee.

USFWS. The agency is concerned about fire, access to public lands, trespass, and hunting. The agency did not identify specific concerns with these issues for the RMP.

COLLABORATING MEETING SUMMARY OF ISSUES AND COMMENTS

DECEMBER 7, 2004 – DAWSON COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT, DAWSON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, MCCONE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, MCCONE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT, RICHLAND COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, WIBAUX COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Attendees

Dave McIlroy - BLM
Mary Bloom - BLM
Kathy Bockness - BLM
Clay Walker – Dawson County Conservation District
Martha Wyse – Dawson County Conservation District
Walter Berntrager – Dawson County Conservation District
Kenny Nemitz – Dawson County Conservation District
Kent Larson – McCone County Commissioners
Jeanne Kirkegard – McCone County Conservation District
Henry T. Johnson – Richland County Commissioners
Don Stepler – Richland County Commissioners
Jim Skillestad – Dawson County Commissioners
Connie Eissinger – McCone County Commissioners
Glenn Hutchinson – Wibaux County Commissioners
Dan Walker - Dawson County Commissioners
Jon Seekins –ALL Consulting
Karen Cantillon – Parametrix
Pam Gunther - Parametrix

In addition to the comments obtained from these agencies during the telephone interviews, the participating agencies offered the following comments.

Decision Criteria. People asked what criteria would be used to make decisions for the RMP.

Energy Development. There was much discussion on other oil and gas energy development occurring in Montana and potential impacts. There was concern that private entities are not meeting deadlines mandated by the government. Implications were that BLM may not be able to ensure that these private entities would meet their deadlines for projects in the Miles City RMP area. There was also concern that too many gas pipelines were being laid on private lands without addressing whether there is overlap among the various pipelines.

Noxious Weeds. Attendees expressed concern that there is not enough interagency coordination to minimize weed infestation. Specific plants mentioned included salt

cedar. The attendees stated that they wanted to learn more about how this issue is being resolved across agencies.

Off Road Vehicles. One person said that his land is impacted by off road vehicles. The land that he referred to may have been BLM leased land. The vehicles also impact sediment into adjacent streams.

Impaired Streams. There was concern about whether streams are identified adequately as impaired. Attendees implied that some streams that were identified as impaired probably should not be listed on the 303(d) list.

Loss of Lease. Attendees stated that some oil and gas companies have been threatening them with loss of a BLM lease if the private owner does not sign an agreement allowing private companies to trespass on their lands.

Public Meetings. An attendee recommended that a more formal process with a court reporter would be most appropriate for the RMP Scoping meetings. Time limits were requested. A news article about the scoping meetings should be sent to the county commissioners who would then post the article in the paper.

**COLLABORATING MEETING SUMMARY OF ISSUES AND COMMENTS
DECEMBER 7, 2004 – CARTER AND FALLON COUNTY**

Attendees

Dave McIlroy—BLM
Mary Bloom - BLM
Kathy Bockness - BLM
Duayne Richards – Carter County Conservation District
Jim Carroll – C-B Grazing
Don Reiger – Fallon County Commissioner
Deborah Ranum – Fallon County Commissioner
James Courtney – Carter County Commissioner
Marlys Carroll - ?
Georgia Bruski – Carter County Conservation District
Donald Rieger – Fallon County Commissioner
Roddy Rost – Fallon County Commissioner
Nico Cantalupo – Fallon/Carter County Extension
Jon Seekins –ALL Consulting
Karen Cantillon – Parametrix
Pam Gunther - Parametrix

In addition to the comments obtained from these agencies during the telephone interviews, the participating agencies offered the following comments.

BLM Mission. An attendee stated that for the RMP, the BLM should refer to FLPMA, the Taylor Grazing Act, and other laws while also citing its mission. The attendees wanted to know what the purpose of the RMP was.

303(d) Designations. Attendees wanted to know how the BLM was going to treat the designation of impaired streams in the planning area. Some people thought that more data gathering may be necessary to confirm delisting. Or was BLM going to assume the state stream designations?

State Plans. There was discussion as to whether state plans and policies should be automatically adopted in to the RMP, particularly if conditions that apply in western Montana do not apply in eastern Montana.

Residential Knowledge. Attendees mentioned that their knowledge of the planning area should be more greatly appreciated and recognized, particularly on issues such as livestock grazing.

Easements. Easements across BLM lands are important to the area, particularly for title insurance.

Maps. There was some comment that maps of existing roads were needed.

Process Understanding. The attendees stated that it was most important that the public scoping meetings explain the RMP process clearly to the meeting attendees.

Advertisement. It was stated that radio and flyers were better ways of informing people of the RMP scoping meetings rather than the newspaper.

Noxious Weeds. An attendee wanted to know BLM's policy on eradication of noxious weeds. The noxious weed problem was cited as spreading throughout the area. Attendees stated that the governments are not doing enough to control the spread of noxious weeds.

Land Exchange. Attendees asked for more information on BLM's procedure for land exchange.

Predators. One attendee stated that predators were a problem, but did not elaborate.

Action Item

BLM should bring maps to the scoping meetings.

**COLLABORATING MEETING SUMMARY OF ISSUES AND COMMENTS
DECEMBER 9, 2004—DANIELS COUNTY, SHERIDAN COUNTY, VALLEY
COUNTY, ROOSEVELT COUNTY**

Attendees

Dave McIlnay—BLM
Mary Bloom—BLM
Kathy Bockness—BLM
Bill Tandy—Daniels County
Gerald Kohler—Sheridan County
David Pippin—Valley County
Jim Shanks—Roosevelt County
Gary Macdonald—Roosevelt County
Jon Seekins –ALL Consulting
Karen Cantillon – Parametrix
Pam Gunther - Parametrix

In addition to the comments obtained from these agencies during the telephone interviews, the participating agencies offered the following comments:

Grazing. A commissioner indicated that a lot of his constituents are unhappy over losing their grazing rights.

Mineral Development. A commissioner expressed concern over Tribal development of oil drilling rights. All the commissioners asked to see mineral lease holding maps.

Land and Road Ownership. A commissioner asked about prescriptive use and entitlement. The commissioner wanted to know what BLMs definition was for these two terms and how do they identified the different uses on maps and if signs are posted stating the prescribed use. Dave McIlnay suggested sharing information about land and road ownership.

Water Rights. A commissioner expressed concern over water rights. He asked that BLM get ownership issues out in the open and address prior claims to water rights.

Public Meetings. Attendees suggested using radio, newspapers, and the Culbertson Extension Service to advertise scoping meetings. They said people would attend if they knew how the issues would impact them.

**COLLABORATING MEETING SUMMARY OF ISSUES AND COMMENTS
DECEMBER 10, 2004—TREASURE, ROSEBUD, POWDER RIVER, CUSTER,
AND PRAIRIE COUNTIES**

Attendees

Dave McIlnay—BLM
Mary Bloom—BLM
Kathy Bockness—BLM
Roger Knapp—Treasure County
Fred Wombolt—BLM
Eric Lepisto—BLM
Todd Yeager—BLM
Daniel Watson—Rosebud County
Brenda Witkowski—BLM
Jean Stahl—Rosebud County
Mack Cole—Treasure County
Betty Aye—Powder River County
Milo Huber—Custer County
Todd Devlin—Prairie County
Jon Seekins –ALL Consulting
Karen Cantillon – Parametrix
Pam Gunther - Parametrix

In addition to the comments obtained from these counties during the telephone interviews, the participating county commissioners offered the following comments:

Cooperating Agency Commitment: A county commissioner wanted to know what kind of participation would be requested as a cooperating agency. She was concerned about the amount of time needed and whether a monetary contribution would be requested.

Access: Several commissioners asked about OHV users crossing private lands and questioned the process BLM would use to either maintain or decommission the roads that counties decided to abandon.

Communication Sites: A commissioner asked whether BLM would consider siting communication towers on public land.

PILT Payments: A commissioner asked what BLM's position was on PILT payments.

Tribal Participation: A commissioner asked how many Indian reservations were included. He asked that the Crow be included.

Agency Accessibility: A commissioner noted that many people won't testify at public meetings, but would visit the Miles City Field Office if staff were accessible.

Noxious Weeds: Several commissioners noted that this was a very significant issue. Salt cedar is of particular concern.

Drought Management: A commissioner asked what BLM planned to do about drought conditions.

Action Items

A commissioner asked that BLM include the Crow Tribe in the RMP process. Dave McIlroy committed to sending out the drought letter earlier.