

Meeting Minutes
 Sierra Front - Northwestern Great Basin Resource Advisory Council
 March 30 & 31, 2010
 Reno, Nevada

I. RAC Attendance and Welcome

9:00 a.m., Tuesday, March 30, 2010 – meeting was called to order by Chairman Gebhardt with the following members of the RAC present:

SIERRA FRONT – NORTHWESTERN GREAT BASIN RESOURCE ADVISORY COUNCIL

<i>COUNCIL MEMBER</i>	<i>RESOURCE/EXPERTISE</i>	<i>3/30/2010</i>
John Gebhardt – Chair	State Agency	X
Patricia Herzog – Vice Chair	Elected Official	
William Bennett	Transportation/ROWs	
Rochanne Downs	Native Americans	X
Michael Drews	Public-At-Large	X
Tim Dufurrena	Nevada Cattlemen	X
Dennis Laybourn	Mining	X
Charles Matton	Wild Horses & Burros	X
William Molini	Wildlife	X
Ernest Paine	Livestock	X
Will Roger Peterson	Recreation	X
<i>VACANT</i>	Energy/Minerals	
Lee Turner	Environment	X
D. Craig Young	Archaeology	X
<i>Tamzen Stringham</i>	Academic	X

BLM Staff Present: Gene Seidlitz, Chris Mclear, Mark Struble, Lisa Ross, Alan Shepherd, Bryant Smith, Linda Kelly, Dan Jacquet, Pilar Ziegler, Corren Sievers, Gary Gumienny, Ron Wenker, Mike Holbert, Libby White, Jeff Wilbanks

Public Present: Alfred Roth, Hylari Roth, Matt Tuma, Jim Carter

II. Summary of Motions Other Than to Approve Minutes

1. Will made the motion to nominate Dave Cooper and Nancy Huffman to replace Donna Stammers and Roy Leach on the Black Rock Subgroup. Charles seconded and passed.
2. Will made the motion that the RAC recommend to the BLM that they use the adaptive management process in the RMP, and the monitoring will continue. Motion was seconded and passed.
3. Willie made the motion that the RAC send a letter of support for the Round 11 preliminary recommendations for the Ballardini Ranch Trailhead project in Washoe County, the Bently Property acquisition in Carson City, and the acquisition of the Estill Ranch parcels in Washoe and Humboldt counties. The motion was seconded and passed.
4. Will made the motion that the RAC send a letter to the administration at UNR, Office of the President, concerning the committees disappointed of the decision to close the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources. Also, cc agencies and congressional. The motion was seconded and passed.

III. Summary of Action Assignments

1. Will and Willie will draft a letter of support for the Round 11 SNPLMA projects.

IV. Minutes from the Meeting in Elko, Nevada, November 2009

Willie made the motion that the minutes for the November meeting be approved. The motion was seconded and passed.

V. RAC Subgroup Reports

Black Rock Subgroup

Will Rogers - Donna Stammers and Roy Leach have resigned from the RAC NCA Subgroup – *see motion above*.

The Subgroup asked for the RAC's support in recommending the BLM Winnemucca District consider increasing staffing levels for the BR Field Office. *See letter from the RAC Subgroup*.

The Subgroup recommends the application of adaptive management in the permit renewals of the Buffalo Hills and Leadville Allotments, which lie within the NCA.

Will thanked Gene and the Winnemucca District for adding the public component to the Admin Center in Gerlach.

The next BR NCA subgroup meeting is in June.

VI. Wild Horse and Burro Subgroup

Chuck Matton – Suggested opening Wilderness areas and WSA's to wild horses, along with an aggressive contraceptive plan.

Recreation RAC Subgroup –

Will Rogers – Reported on the Red Rock modest fee changes. The REC RAC is set up to review fee changes.

VII. FIELD MANAGERS REPORTS: Written reports from Carson City and Winnemucca were provided to the RAC members one week in advance, so Chris McAlear and Gene Seidlitz reviewed the handouts and answered clarification questions.

Winnemucca – Gene Seidlitz - Blue Mountain power plant is interested in expanding the well fields. New York Canyon (fast track) and Terragen Geo Thermal exploration within the Stillwater Mountain area. There are several TCP (Cultural Properties). There is significant interest in Seismic work. Solid minerals – mines want to expand because of the price of gold. There is interest in lithium/uranium on the Mont. Mtns. The CRI EA is in the initial stages and hoping to release it in June. The Standard Mine final EA was issued early March 2010. Sandman PEA is out for public comment. Black Rock Admin Facility (ARRA) project– North of Gerlach will include interpretation, and a shop and yard for a BLM fire truck. The WD has hired a Native American Coordinator and archeologist. The School House Butte EA is out for review and hope to have for sale the second quarter of the year. Ruby Pipeline, final EIS issued in Jan. FERC still has not signed a document with a decision of the route. NSD will be signing the ROW. MOU have not been completed. Received a POD without appendices. NCLS units – This year alone we have funds for these units. Working with Burning Man for 2010 permit and application for 2011-15. The WD is working with Humboldt County on the hiking and biking trail. Water Canyon recreation area.....improvements after the fire. Plan calls for no OHV use in lower area (zone 1). May amend the decision for OHV use in zone 1 with speed restrictions, etc. There is a proposal to develop another access to get to zone 2. Calico Horse gather – removed 1922 horses. At a private facility in Fallon. Observation Days three days a week. The WD is the process of coordinating a flight with Sheldon/BLM OR, NV, and CA. to get better numbers. Range – Western Water shed project – two more weeks of litigation in Winnemucca – Soldier Meadows allotment. Fuels Management – Montana Mountains – collaborative effort with others to

develop fuel breaks. RMP- Thursday briefing with Bob Abbey and WO. Draft RMP should be available for review in May for 90 days. Public meetings in Reno, Lovelock, and Winnemucca during this time. Stimulus projects – Due to funding concerns, dropped the NCA Road Access project, so now have three. Wilderness Management plan – this summer, draft should be released for public review. (see DM's report for more information)

Carson City - Chris McAlear – Carson City has nine ARRA projects. The Comstock Merger Mill at American Flat project will develop an EA , to include alternative plans to make the site safe. Repaving of the Indian Creek Campground road and the Sand Mountain access road should both start by mid-May. District wide riparian enclosures will be done next couple years. One wild horse gather has been completed this FY in the Garfield Flat area of Mineral County with 205 horses removed. There are about 1,850 wild horses at the Fallon Facility. The old Snows facility still has 250 horses and should be shipped to Adoption facilities by the end of April. Competitive adoptions continue quarterly at Northern Nevada Correctional Facility in Carson City; they are averaging about \$1000 for saddle-trained horses. The fire season was mild last year. Lost a SEAT pilot in a plane crash with total acreage of 33,000 acres. Several fuels management projects underway. Seven wildland urban interface projects. Over 11,000 acres of fuels management. Eighty two grazing permits on the CD, averaging 4-6 permit renewals per year and trying to get into a regular rotation. Wildlife habitat management – The Stillwater Field Office with Hoyt fire treatment of cheat grass. Red Rock fire – aerial seeding. More seedlings planted in the spring. Upper colony fuels project – 1000 acres. The Swan Lake Nature study area is a busy place because of the significant population of birds – high visibility area. Winter Ranch increases some of the land base – EA is being finalized. Concerning Geo Thermal the biggest focus, put together fluids team. The Carson District has the largest Geo Thermal program in BLM and two Fast Track project. Two wind energy projects proposed. The CD has a new recreation planner. The Sierra Front Field Office is very busy with SRP's. There has been a big increase in dumping on public lands. (see DM report for more information)

VIII. Alan Shepherd – Wild Horse & Burro Program

The Winnemucca and Tonopah WH&B positions have been filled. Alan explained the Nevada BLM Wild Horse and Burro Program Statistics – Data as of 03/29/2010.

Nevada BLM is working together on a management plan with other areas to manage horses. Sheldon, BLM OR, NV, and CA will have a collaborative management of horses in over two million acres.

Secretary's Initiative – Sustainable herds.....looking at population growth, inventory, fertility control, adoption team, communication team, treasured herds – promote uniqueness of certain herds, long term holding sanctuary for horses that are not adoptable – this group in looking at areas where these horses can go. Developing a communications plan. There is an aggressive schedule by Sept. of 2010. Scoping/public meetings in April. Implementation strategy.

IX. Burning Man Event Monitoring

X. SNPLMA Round 11 Report –

Libby White, Jeff Wilbanks – The SFNWGB RAC was briefed on Round 11 project nominations for the southern Nevada Public Land Management Act (SNPLMA) Currently in public comment period until April 8. The Executive Committee will meet the end of May to prioritize projects. Details are all on the website. Letters of support for the projects need to be submitted by April 28, to Ron Wenker, Nevada State Director.

Sage Grouse Presentation –

Steve Abele, USFWS, Shawn Esponosa, NDOW– The Service has been petitioned to list Sage Grouse. In 2005, made a “not warranted” listing, but they were then sued. Sage Grouse is warranted, but is precluded by higher or more pressing needs. All threats since 2005 still exist. The species has been assigned the number of 8. Warranted, but precluded means there is no statutory protection under the ESA. NDOW retains management. Energy Development is considered to be a threat, but wild fire is the biggest threat. Sage Brush Conservation Act would provide funding for habitat restoration. NRCS – No money available for monitoring. (see handout for more information)

XI. Public Comment Period

1. **Hylari Roth** - Do you know if NDOW has plans for a standardized statewide map? *It will be largely developed off a previously created map.*
2. **Alfred Roth** – On the NF, on the Sweet Water Range, they did a study to designate Wilderness, is that going to affect activities in that area? *Yes, it could change things with the designation of wilderness.*
3. **Alfred Roth** – With 130,000 acres of Geo Thermal, what requirements does someone have to have cut off access? *Every acre will have to be looked at individually.*
4. **Alfred Roth** – Is Senator Reid's proposal to cut off acreage still in the works?
No
5. **Alfred Roth** - When BLM land is sold to the publicwho has control of access? *If there is already a public road, the road does not go away. Utility line*

right a ways, etc. also stay. BLM will maintain road access. Public access is not denied.

6. **Alfred Roth** – When Round 11 funding does not recommend a project, does it have to be re-submitted? Yes.
7. **Alfred Roth** – Why does more money go towards restoration projects instead of fire prevention/fuels programs? *That money comes from hazardous fuels funds.*

It was discussed there is a proposal to eliminate the Dept. of Agriculture and Range Program at UNR.

XII. Adjournment – 5:15 p.m.

XIII. March 31 Field Trip

Because of inclement weather the field trip was cancelled.

The following presentations were at the Carson City District Office.

Rich Hamilton, GBW – New Comstock Wind Energy Project Area.

Silver Saddle Ranch (SSR) – BBQ Lunch

Rich Hamilton, GBW – Reported on the Bentley Property (Carson City) Proposed SNPLMA Round 11, pending conservation easement on Ranch 1 (Round 9), dedicated easement on River Fork Ranch (Round 4). Both sites are near Genoa in Douglas County.

XIV. The meeting adjourned at 1:30 p.m.

The next Sierra Front-Northwestern Great Basin RAC meeting will be July 13 & 14, 2010, in Winnemucca.

Suggested agenda topics:

- *Draft Winnemucca Resource Management Plan
- *Wilderness Plans
- *Cheat Grass Die-Off Implications
- *Renewable Energy Projects Updates
- *Possible Blue Mountain Geothermal site visit
- *Water Issues with Renewable Energy Projects
- *Black Rock Stimulus Projects