

Mojave-Southern Great Basin Resource Advisory Council
Meeting Minutes
Friday, November 14, 2008
Arizona Ballroom Salon F, Gold Coast Hotel Casino, 4000 W. Flamingo Road,
Las Vegas, Nevada

Resource Advisory Council members present and category represented:

Dr. John E. Hiatt, Chairperson	Wildlife	Category 2
Steven Mellington, vice-Chairperson	Public at Large	Category 3
Mauricia Baca	Environment	Category 2
Douglas "Stretch" Baker	Transportation and ROW	Category 1
Don "Skip" Canfield	State Agency Representative	Category 3
Julie Von Tobel Gleason	Wild Horse and Burro	Category 2
Elise McAllister	Dispersed Recreation	Category 2
Greg Seymour	Archeology/Historic	Category 2
Dr. Peter Starkweather	Academic/UNLV	Category 3
Claire Toomey	Permitted Recreation	Category 1

Resource Advisory Council members absent and category represented:

Kenny Anderson	Native American	Category 3
Tim Carlson	Mineral Development	Category 1
Joni Eastley	Elected Official	Category 3
Ed Higbee	Ranching/Grazing	Category 1
Gracian Uhalde	Ranching/Grazing	Category 1

Bureau of Land Management (BLM) representatives present:

Chris Hanefeld	BLM Ely District Public Affairs Specialist
Hillierie Patton	BLM Southern Nevada Public Affairs Specialist
Mary Jo Rugwell	BLM Southern Nevada District Manager
John Ruhs, Designated Federal Official	BLM Ely District Manager
Tom Seley	BLM Tonopah Field Manager

Public

None

A copy of each attachment is listed in the text of or at the end of these minutes and is also on file with the official copy of the minutes in the Ely Field Office of the BLM. Persons desiring to review said minutes should contact Chris Hanefeld, public affairs specialist, at (775) 289-1842.

7:30 a.m. Chairperson John Hiatt called the meeting to order. The RAC members, BLM managers and staff introduced themselves and welcomed new member Mauricia Baca.

8:05 a.m. The RAC elected officers. The RAC unanimously approved John Hiatt and Steve Mellington as chairperson and vice-chairperson, respectively.

8:10 a.m. John Ruhs, BLM Ely District Manager and Designated Federal Official, presented the RAC with discussion topics and a proposed meeting schedule for fiscal year 2009 (attachment 1).

Skip Canfield said he would like to provide input on a pending land bill for Gold Butte. Ruhs advised the RAC that it would be outside the RAC charter to provide input on a congressional action. Ruhs suggested the RAC members provide input as private citizens, instead. Hiatt suggested the RAC provide input on Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act (SNPLMA) Round 10 proposals, instead.

Hiatt asked if renewable energy should be placed on the first meeting's agenda instead of the second, as proposed. Peter Starkweather and Julie Von Tobel Gleason suggested that energy be a standing item for fy09. Ruhs asked if the RAC would consider forming an energy sub-or working group that would report to the council. Mary Jo Rugwell said BLM wanted to limit discussion items to allow the RAC adequate time and opportunity to thoroughly analyze the issues. Using renewable energy as an example, Hiatt asked BLM how it proposed to provide the RAC the pertinent information for review. He asked if BLM could provide the RAC access to a database. Mauricia Baca said that The Nature Conservancy (TNC) was in the process of updating a database. The RAC determined it would be best for BLM to provide the RAC with the information to be reviewed sooner rather than later. Greg Seymour said he would like to tour a solar generation facility to determine what impact(s) there are, e.g., topsoil removal, and what actions would be needed to resolve same. A brief discussion ensued re: educational-type workshop opportunities. Seymour suggested that the sub-or working group for renewable energy attend a training session of some type. Seymour volunteered to participate on the sub-or working group. The other volunteers were Mauricia Baca, Julie Von Tobel Gleason and John Hiatt. Ruhs asked the sub-or working group members to determine dates for a conference call to discuss educational opportunities. Ruhs directed Chris Hanefeld, BLM Ely District Public Affairs Specialist, to update and distribute the RAC contact list.

Hiatt reviewed the schedule and topics for the three BLM-proposed meetings. Rugwell said BLM proposed the Pahrump meeting to help communicate the agency to the community. Hiatt asked if the RAC should plan for one or two-day meetings, citing travel time for members traveling long distances, e.g., Skip Canfield who travels from Reno. Ruhs suggested conducting a two-day meeting in February to provide for a field trip to discuss renewable energy. Ruhs said the field trip might help guide discussion at the April meeting. Mellington offered to make available to the RAC in April a presentation by the firm that recently installed solar panels at the Nevada Test Site.

The RAC scheduled the first meeting for fy09 and approved the discussion topics. The meeting is scheduled Thursday and Friday, Feb. 5-6, in Pahrump. A

half-day field tour re: renewable energy is scheduled Thursday morning, beginning at 9. The RAC determined that they would discuss the Pahrump Field Office, Conservation Transfer Area (CTA), and BLM Ely District Resource Management Plan (RMP) implementation, as well as review SNPLMA Round 10 to provide guidance to BLM.

Hillierie Patton told the RAC the Southern Nevada District Office would make the members aware of the level of input needed prior to the presentation.

Hiatt asked BLM for an update on off-highway vehicles (OHV), in particular special recreation-permitted events. Rugwell said BLM does not have the capacity to process the number of requests received. Rugwell said it has become a land health issue. She asked the RAC to identify a sub-or working group to help BLM address concerns, e.g., how many special recreation permits to issue yearly, and race locations and routes. Ruhs said that both the BLM Ely District and Tonopah Field Office have travel management planning (TMP) processes for the RAC to review. Ruhs too suggested the RAC establish an OHV sub-or working group. Patton added that the sub-or working group could include non-paid, non-RAC members. Hiatt asked if BLM would provide personnel support. Rugwell replied in the affirmative. Ruhs suggested that the sub-or working group focus on BLM processes and determine guidance on a regional (tri-district) and/or district-only basis. The RAC determined to take the OHV sub-or working group to the other RACs following the breakout session.

Ruhs asked if the RAC would be willing to identify a sub-or working group to 1) assist with Ely (District) Resource Management Plan (RMP) implementation, and 2) provide advice and guidance on the Battle Mountain RMP (in collaboration with a sub-or working group representing the Northeast Great Basin RAC).

The RAC scheduled the second fy09 meeting for Friday, April 24, in Caliente, to review and discuss proposed BLM Ely District travel management planning processes which call for public collaboration on a route-by-route basis to ensure that the proposed planning processes meet community needs, and to study renewable energy development to provide input to BLM. Tom Seley asked for the RAC to provide input on the Battle Mountain District Resource Management Plan (RMP).

9 a.m. BREAK

9:15 a.m. *The RAC scheduled the third meeting for fy09. The meeting is scheduled Thursday and Friday, June 25-26, in Tonopah. The meeting is scheduled to begin early Thursday afternoon and conclude early Friday afternoon. Discussion items are the Battle Mountain RMP, and Ash Springs Recreation Area Management Plan (RAMP) and other RAMPs as they become available. Baca suggested to the RAC that the private landowner adjacent to the BLM-administered Ash Springs Recreation Area might be willing to work with the*

organization Safe Harbor and Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) regarding the future of the privately-owned segment of the spring. Regarding RAMPs other than Ash Springs, Rugwell said the Southern Nevada District has approximately four in various stages of development, but that personnel changes have slowed progress.

The RAC conducted a brief discussion on feedback mechanisms (attachment 2).

Gleason said the RAC should establish a sub-or working group to address wild horse issues. She suggested the sub-or working group immediately write a letter providing the Washington Office with program guidance. Doran Sanchez, BLM Nevada State Office chief of communications, said the Northeast Great Basin RAC supports the sub-or working group concept, has selected three members to serve on the sub-or working group, and will propose at the Tri-RAC that the sub-or working group be statewide. The Mojave-Southern RAC immediately selected three members to serve on the sub-or working group, i.e., Julie Von Tobel Gleason, John Hiatt and Claire Toomey.

Hiatt said the RAC determined several years ago that it would fulfill an advisory role for the U.S. Forest Service. He suggested the Forest Service be invited to participate.

Hiatt asked Rugwell if the Southern Nevada District would require RAC advice on any issues involving feral livestock and trespass related to Mr. Cliven Bundy. Rugwell replied that multiple agencies were working on the issue(s). She said that Angie Lara, Acting Las Vegas Field Manager, is currently developing processes and outreach strategies. Rugwell added that the Southern Nevada District would communicate those to the RAC. Elise McAllister suggested to Rugwell that BLM communicate/coordinate with the Clark County Commission.

McAllister asked BLM what the agency was doing to resolve Skip Canfield's visual resource management (VRM) concerns. Canfield told BLM that he would like to see light shields installed on large facilities as a condition for approval. Rugwell said that could be accomplished. Canfield also said that BLM was not forwarding comments received from the state clearinghouse. Rugwell responded that project managers had been made aware of Canfield's concern(s). Hiatt said the Migratory Bird Act mandates that the federal government provide for migratory bird safety. Mellington suggested that the RAC write a formal letter to the designated federal official. Canfield offered to prepare a draft letter.

McAllister said that "side-by-side" all terrain vehicles (ATVs) are increasing in popularity and asked if that be an issue in regards to current standard trail width. Hiatt said it would be an appropriate topic under Travel Management Planning, scheduled for discussion at the Caliente meeting.

McAllister noted that geo-caching is also increasing in popularity. A brief discussion ensued re: the Ely RMP, which directs enthusiasts to establish a virtual site only in wilderness. Outside sensitive sites there is no established BLM policy.

The RAC unanimously voted to have Chairperson John Hiatt brief the other two RACs. Hiatt adjourned the meeting at 10:20 a.m.

APPROVED BY:

Date: _____

John Hiatt, Chair
Mojave-Southern Great Basin
Resource Advisory Council

- Minutes provided by Chris Hanefeld, BLM Ely District Office -

Attachments:

1. Potential RAC Discussion Topics for FY09
2. Mechanisms for the RAC to Provide Feedback to BLM