

**BLM NEVADA MOJAVE-SOUTHERN GREAT BASIN (MOSO)  
RAC BREAKOUT SESSION**

John Ascuaga's Nugget Hotel Casino  
1100 Nugget Avenue  
Sparks, Nevada

**Friday, January 21  
Pavilion C**

Resource Advisory Council members present:

Steve Mellington	Public at Large
Greg Seymour	Archaeology
Gracian Uhalde	Federal Grazing
Douglas ("Stretch") Baker	Transportation / ROW
Julie von Tobel-Gleason	Wild Horses & Burros
Edwin Higbee	Ranching and Federal Grazing
Elise McAllister	Recreation (Dispersed)
Tim Carlson	Energy / Minerals
Joni Eastley	Elected Official (Nye County Commissioner)
Jane Feldman	Environment
Ed Weber	Academic (UNLV)
Don ("Skip") Canfield	State Agency
Heather Fisher	Permitted Recreation

Resource Advisory Council members not present:

Mauricia Baca	Environment
Kenny A. Anderson	Native American Representative

Bureau of Land Management (BLM) representatives present:

Mary Jo Rugwell	Southern Nevada District Manager and Designated Federal Official
Tom Seley	Tonopah Field Manager
Mike Herder	Ely Associate District Manager
Hillierie Patton	Public Affairs Specialist
Rochelle Francisco	Public Affairs Specialist
Doran Sanchez	Nevada Chief of Communications

Visitor/Public present:

Jan Schultz

- 8:00 a.m. Call to Order. Steve Mellington, RAC Co-Chairperson, called the MOSO breakout meeting to order and conducted introductions.
- 8:10 a.m. Housekeeping. Hillerie Patton, BLM Southern Nevada District Public Affairs Specialist and Co-RAC Coordinator, covered housekeeping duties, and announced that Chris Hanefeld will complete travel vouchers for all attendees at most meetings. Hillerie collected hotel receipts and related information and informed new RAC members of the procedures for travel reimbursement. Mike Herder, and Hillerie Patton, collected signed travel vouchers with receipts and will have them processed at the Ely District

Mary Jo will serve as the Designated Federal Official (DFO). Hillerie explained that RAC member names and categories only will be online, but no contact information will be included. Members' contact information will be kept internally within the BLM. Hillerie indicated that the offices have interested party listings that will only be provided to BLM personnel, unless the RAC member or chairperson has indicated it is okay to do otherwise. Mary Jo reiterated how cautious BLM is with personally identifiable information and contact information is held confidential. Chris Hanefeld will be the keeper of the list in Ely while Hillerie will keep the Southern Nevada list.

- 8:15 a.m. Mary Jo thanked everyone in attendance for the time they have taken to be present and how much she appreciates their contribution. She asked everyone to look at the updated roster once received. It shows newly-appointed members, those who have been members for years, and those whose terms expire this year (September 30, 2011). It will be helpful for those members with expiring terms to start thinking about reapplying and Mary Jo also encouraged assistance from the RAC members with outreach in getting new members to apply. Mary Jo stressed the importance of discussions and meetings at the subgroup level. This is an area where more dedication to issues will be needed. BLM is looking forward to a productive year with great interaction. BLM has great people but it also relies on RAC members as advisors to the BLM to assist with knowledge, expertise and advice from their respective areas. The more information BLM receives, the better the thought process will be and will ensure BLM is headed in the right direction.

Mary Jo reviewed the four significant MOSO subgroups, which are: OHV, Renewable Energy, Land Use Planning and Wild Horse and Burro. The Recreational RAC (Rec RAC) is a combined RAC which includes members from each RAC with a more concentrated and narrow focus. Mary Jo indicated that outreach will occur to re-engage the Native American representative.

Joni Eastley asked if the Energy and Minerals category included energy, and the answer is yes.

Mary Jo asked members if they were interested in taking former long-standing MOSO RAC members, John Hiatt and Peter Starkweather to dinner when the group is in Las Vegas for their next meeting. Everyone agreed, so Julie Von-Tobel Gleason and Hillerie will arrange this. As a sidebar, Rochelle Francisco added that she has already ordered thank you plaques for outgoing members. Each is a wood plaque

with a brass plate and includes an accompanying cover letter signed by Ron Wenker, former BLM Nevada State Director.

8:30 a.m. Steve Mellington asked Mary Jo about BLM's RAC funding status for 2011. Mary Jo explained that BLM is operating on a continuing resolution (CR) currently through March 2011. It remains unclear if there will be a new budget by then; what has been confirmed is that BLM will experience a 5-10% reduction overall, but particulars are still uncertain. Operating an entire year on a CR has been done in the past. Mary Jo explained that the assumption is spending remains similar to the prior year. Because the Tri-RAC was postponed until January 2011, if the usual meetings occurred this year as in the past, there would actually be 3-5 meetings. It was noted that, if all three MOSO RAC meetings take place in Las Vegas, it would require less travel (still will require some) because the majority of members are located in Las Vegas. It is hoped that BLM facilities can also be used for meeting locations. Travel from Tonopah, Caliente and other smaller areas have limited amenities which makes having meetings there more challenging.

Joni Eastley indicated that Nye County will pay for their travel expenses if needed.

8:40 a.m. MOSO RAC member and subgroup introductions were conducted.

8:45 a.m. Election of new members. Joni Eastley was nominated and voted as the MOSO RAC's new Chairperson and Steve Mellington was nominated and voted to continue on as Co-Chairperson for 2011.

As the new MOSO RAC Chairperson, Joni briefly reviewed her meeting philosophy and the importance of starting and ending meetings on time as well as sticking to agendas to accomplish the work that needs to be done.

Scheduling of 2011 MOSO RAC Meetings. Three RAC meetings (MOSO) were scheduled for 2011.

A number of the new members expressed an interest in visiting the Antelope Complex Gather area and going out to view the gather on a public observation day. Julie Gleason indicated that she spoke to Alan Shepherd and he is willing to take a group out to the site. Mike Herder continued by announcing upcoming planned gathers. All agreed they were interested in viewing and attending a gather.

2011 meetings are as follows:

1. First MOSO RAC Meeting: **Wednesday, March 16, 2011** beginning at 9:00 a.m. was set for the next MOSO RAC Meeting in Las Vegas with the location tentatively set at the Red Rock NCA Visitor Center. Hillerie will confirm availability. The main topic of discussion: SNPLMA and Subgroup report from the Antelope Gather.  
*\*Subgroups will arrange a visit to the Antelope Gather, TBD.*
2. Second MOSO RAC Meeting: **Thursday, July 21, 2011** at the Southern Nevada District Office. Main topics of discussion: Las Vegas & Battle

Mountain Resource Management Plans (RMPs), Land Use Planning, Wild Lands Policy and Transmission Lines.

*\*Subgroup meeting to be held on Wednesday, July 20, 2011 with RMP as the topic.*

3. Third MOSO RAC Meeting: **Thursday, September 22, 2011** at the Southern Nevada District Office. Main topics of discussion: Recreation and OHV and subgroup reports.

Tom Seley and Mike Herder will ensure that there are no conflicts with the Northeastern RAC meetings, as the Battle Mountain and Ely districts are split between two different RACs. Duties must be split by BLM district and field managers.

Additional Meeting Topics. Steve Mellington and Joni Eastley discussed two RMPs and the importance of timing MOSO RAC meetings accordingly. Joni asked that she, Steve and Mary Jo work on the agendas together, along with Chris Hanefeld or Hillerie. To review broader topics and ensure they cover all issues and subgroups, it was discussed that choosing broader topics of discussions for each meeting, then adding a few if needed, would work best.

RAC comments to the RMPs and Solar Programmatic EISs are very important. It was decided that RAC subgroups will review the documents, draft a letter and then provide recommendations to the RAC. Hillerie indicated that a DM Report is already provided to RAC members between meetings. Everyone decided the DM report is sufficient and if additional information is needed, RAC members can ask for a specific presentation anytime.

Elise McAllister requested an updated sage grouse presentation during a future MOSO RAC meeting. Mary Jo indicated that Ely and Battle Mountain could provide a report. Ely falls under NEGB and MOSO and could provide a presentation on how each district is following up on the sage grouse issue on their landscape approach projects.

Joni Eastley added, and Elise concurred, that transmission line topics and discussion could also be included. They will add the current and proposed transmission projects to the agenda in the July 2011 meeting.

Ed Higbee requested that HCPs and associated funding could be added as a topic of interest for possible discussion at a later meeting.

#### Other Business: Topics of Interest

Wild Horse and Burro Gather Discussion/Visitation. A possibility of having the Wild Horse and Burro subgroup meeting in conjunction with a visit to observe the Antelope Gather was discussed and there was considerable interest. The group agreed. Other subgroups also expressed an interest to join the WH&B Subgroup. Julie Gleason will keep an eye on the public observation dates offered and relay the information to the subgroup for setting a visit date. Hillerie brought up the possibility

of renting a van and going as a group. A tour of the gather and then a tour of the area in conjunction with the meeting might be a consideration as well.

Skip Canfield asked if the group could narrow down a date to attend a public observation day. Mike Herder informed the group of the benefits and offerings of a specified public observation day. If the RAC chooses another off day when no formal observation is scheduled, he indicated BLM can work with those wishing to visit to ensure someone is available to accompany them.

Dates were discussed and it was decided that not everyone is available at the same time for the first visit (during Antelope). Julie Gleason will work with Mike Herder to set up a first visit either the first or second week of February and will get back to the group via email. If not everyone can attend, another visit will be set at a later date for an upcoming gather.

Ed Higbee specifically asked to go on record and expressed his concern regarding Ms. Pickens proposal and the Spruce Mountain complex and that it needs to be closely monitored. Discussion took place with visiting that location, as well. During the meeting, Mike Herder spoke with the Northeastern Great Basin RAC. They have scheduled a summer meeting on June 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> to Spruce Mountain and have extended an invitation to the MOSO RAC. It was discussed that perhaps a WH&B Subgroup meeting could be done together between the MOSO and the NEGB RACs in conjunction with the visit, as well.

Tom Seley emphasized how important and significant this idea is for RAC members to see first-hand how the Bureau manages a gather. BLM's challenge is very apparent and it is a good idea to view how it deals with a number of issues simultaneously.

#### Secretarial Order on Wild Lands

Wild Lands. Mike Herder pointed out the similarities between the process regarding the Secretary's new Wild Lands order with Areas of Critical Environmental Concerns (ACECs) and how it is comparable. ACECs are identified as places that have some sort of resource value. ACECs are designated during the land use planning process with public input. Management of these areas is based on the resources within the ACEC. Wild Lands will be a similar process as the designation of ACECs. Special types of management that would protect these areas would be determined. This is done with substantial public input through the planning process and management prescriptions would be discussed and put into place. Prior to 2003, Wilderness Study Areas (WSA) were designated through the land use planning process, and they included generic guidance for protection of wilderness values that applied to WSAs. In 2003, the authority for designating WSAs was withdrawn. Wild Lands differ from WSAs in that management is site specific, based on local conditions and include only those prescriptions necessary to protect local conditions and include only those prescriptions necessary to protect local values. Districts not in the process of land use planning, such as Ely, would not be involved in the designation of Wild Lands, but would review each NEPA action to determine the effect of the proposed action on wilderness characteristics.

There was a discussion of the MOSO RAC's Role in the Order. It is only applicable to those lands not previously inventoried. Doran Sanchez sees the RACs role as providing input to Mary Jo as the DFO as there are a number of land use plans(LUP) in the MOSO RACs area. The Order provides clear policy; it is not for debate. From this point on, he said, regarding any land planning process, the Order is a component that will be used. That is the time for the RACs to provide recommendations, i.e, if something qualifies or is not applicable. The RAC will provide comments and recommendations and they will be considered. No public input is being requested; policy is set. There is no urgency to review the policy, rather it is how this policy will be applicable to land use planning. July's meeting on LUP will be the meeting to discuss and apply any recommendations. The only way to add a designation is now through a LUP and its corresponding public comment process.

Doran and Hillerie will coordinate sending the MOSO RAC the link to BLM's site with public information and talking points on the Wild Lands Order. Doran indicated it does not set anything aside, it is simply adding policy and direction to analyze public lands.

BLM District Managers can indicate which areas within their respective designations are important to be reviewed, which is all through the LUP process. They can determine whether a LUP amendment is required, and if they believe the land has those types of values and wish to propose it as a wild Land designation, they would still have to wait until they could do a LUP amendment and wait for public comment. Skip Canfield asked if the scope of the RMP revision is enough to cover this order and also how the term "wild land" is defined. Mary Jo indicated that as long as they are in the process, it must be looked at, particularly in those areas in which a LUP has been completed. In the wild lands case, LUP amendments may be required.

Mary Jo indicated an amendment and revision cannot be done at any time, due to budget constraints. This is the reason that a number of areas need a revision but must wait. Jane stated, if a plan changes too frequently, it's not really a plan but a moving target. In general, it's good management to rewrite a plan to less frequently and amend only as necessary.

#### Current State Funding Issues and Cultural/Native (SHPO) Status

Greg Seymour brought up the topic of zero funding for the department of cultural affairs in Nevada this year and how it may be a definite issue. Any Federal action/project that requires State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) concurrence will need to go through the Washington office which will determine if comment is necessary. Timelines will be significantly stressed (and stretched). Project proponents that rely on grant funding, which requires NEPA can be affected. The process is not yet clear. Greg indicated that Washington State and Hawaii have encountered a lack of SHPO, and have designated others to assist. The SHPO and the MOU are the two items BLM has in place for native and cultural issues for the NEPA analysis process

It was discussed and brought up by Elise McAllister what the RAC could do, if anything, as a group. The RAC cannot write a letter directly to the Governor, as they are advisors to the BLM. As *individuals* and *members of other groups*, however, each RAC member can weigh in strongly. Greg Seymour asked if BLM has been corresponding with the state regarding SHPO funding and the implications. Doran will follow-up with Amy Lueders, Acting State Director, and Tom Burke, Nevada State Archaeologist and provide a write up to Hillerie to respond to the RAC on the status.

Mary Jo explained the significance of this funding issue to the NEPA process for projects. Whenever an action is brought to BLM (whether it be a project, land use authorization, etc), BLM must go through the NEPA process with a component of that being a cultural resources piece. BLM's archaeologist can make no adverse affect call, which is sent to SHPO. BLM and SHPO have an agreement on the process. If SHPO is no longer in place, BLM will need to go through the Washington office, which may dramatically affect timelines to that NEPA piece.

Doran Sanchez said he, along with Amy Lueders, will be briefing the new State Legislature next week and this topic of concern will be brought up to the Governor by BLM. However, the BLM cannot use the RACs comments. In addition, it would be more effective for the RAC members to comment to the state as private groups and entities. They can bring a level of expertise based on the RAC experience but also directly and indirectly, which could prove even more effective. To raise awareness, Doran will mention to the Governor that this particular issue was a topic of discussion with BLM and its RAC.

Greg Seymour has already prepared talking points and will forward this to the group. Jane asked if Joni and Greg believed that Congressional staff and legislatures should be contacted directly, and the answer was yes.

#### MOSO RAC Subgroup Overview.

#### OHV. (Elise McAllister)

New Members for 2011: Elise McAllister, Heather Fisher, Doug Baker, Ed Higbee.

Mission: Identify issues and return with a list of possible solutions for the RAC to adapt and for DMs to incorporate into LUPs, to include travel management plans, etc. The subgroup was founded last year and it took the year to completely form. There was a challenge with the number of issues involved in OHV. At last year's Tri-RAC meeting and other RAC meetings, BLM DM's asked for recommendations across the District's boundaries that would provid consistency as well as sustainability. That would be the main task, but the group also wanted to identify and discuss permitted and causal use as both have different impacts on the lands. Additionally, social meeting sites were determined; small groups were formed to decide to use the land via vehicle or on foot. They were tasked to look at these specifics and identify other issues that may come up associated with OHV

use. They have been brainstorming to provide possible solutions. The group's main focus is to provide sustainability and provide consistent guidelines that can be adapted. Will meet and come back to BLM with possible solutions and condensed information that the RAC can possibly adopt and incorporate into RMPs or travel management documents.

Relevant items of interest: Dust, law enforcement staffing, funding, race events, user conflicts, etc. All were discussed by members in September 2010. The group is seeking direction from BLM managers about what they would like them to do as it is a very broad category – although the focus is OHV, it also includes recreation.

Mary Jo indicated that input on meet-up groups on lands would be beneficial. Related to Red Rock, there are issues from user groups stating that BLM should not manage meet up groups. This is a time when everyone wants to be out and BLM has to be able to manage what is going on. The goal is not to charge money but to be aware of what is happening in particular areas so that all users experience the lands positively. Management of natural resources with a large population base is a challenge but must be done. It was mentioned that permitted outfitters have to pay for certain group events, so why is it a bad idea for BLM to do so? If the RAC subgroup can provide recommendations to BLM on hiking groups, for example, to address the questions coming to us as to why we are regulating, that feedback would be quite beneficial. It was mentioned that events and money brought into the communities and economies is beneficial to those communities, but also provides complications.

Discussion about how land use planning is related to OHV took place in particular about existing limitations and movement between districts. There are reasons values are set and these always need to be taken into consideration.

Land Use Planning. (Don "Skip" Canfield).

New Members for 2011: Skip Canfield, Mauricia Baca, Julie Gleason and Ed Higbee.

Mission. The main focus of the LUP subgroup is working to provide comments to BLM on the Resource Management Plans (RMPs) that are currently in process. The subgroup wants to review the Las Vegas previous RMP and Battle Mountain's RMPs.

Renewable Energy. (Greg Seymour).

New Members for 2011: Greg Seymour, Joni Eastley, Ed Higbee, Jane Feldman, Tim Carlson and Mauricia Baca. (Greg volunteered to be the subgroup's Chair.)

Mission. Rather than specific projects, this group met at higher more general levels, and focused on more process-driven and technology-related issues. Water usage is one example. The group makes recommendations to BLM assisting with the Right-of-Way (ROW) process, streamlining, dealing with proponents, etc. The main focus of this group has been on solar, as it has been the largest renewable energy issue. Transmission was not an issue (SWIP was a done deal, for example). Citing has been discussed, helping BLM through dealing with a good amount of projects. They have been looking at development of a specific process; a lot of discussion has taken place within both the state and local level. Individual projects have not been discussed.

Wild Horses and Burros. (Julie Gleason).

New Members for 2011: Julie Gleason, Gracian Uhalde, Tim Carlson. Joni and Heather will attend as their schedules permit.

Mission. The group's focus is to make recommendations to BLM on how to improve the gather process. The subgroup met with horse specialists and other RAC members across Nevada. At the end of the year, they submitted letters to the Nevada State Director with their opinion; these were also provided at the National Wild Horse and Burro Conference in Denver this past summer. A few of their recommendations included requesting a method other than direct count and increase of fertility control, which were included in the Denver conference. Following the conference, the subgroup met, using the Secretary's initiative and compiling a letter with recommendations, which were restated from the first letter. This year's focus will be on actual implementation of that plan and how it affects the horses and the data.

10:50 a.m. Battle Mountain District Office Resource Management Plan (RMP) Presentation/Overview.

Chris Worthington (RMP Team Lead) in the Battle Mountain District Office, and Andrew Gentile from the contractor, EMPSi provided the MOSO RAC with a brief update of the district's RMP process. The comment period ends February 11, 2011.

The Battle Mountain District Office is in the process of updating its RMP. The following facts and particulars were presented:

- Planning Area: 13.5 million acres
- Decision Area: 10.5 million acres
- Four Counties: Esmeralda, Eureka, Lander and Nye

### What is a RMP?

- The RMP identifies land allocations, including restrictions and provides comprehensive management direction for and/or allocates use of all resources.
- It is a primary tool that guides BLM management.
- It supports dual mandate of multiple use and sustained yield.
- It establishes goals and objectives for resource management and the measures needed to achieve them.

### Issues to be Addressed:

- Energy Development (oil, gas, renewable energy)
- Vegetation Management
- Invasive/Noxious Weeds
- Forestry & Woodlands
- Drought Management/Climate Change
- Recreation
- Wilderness
- Special Designation Areas
- Travel Management
- Lands and Realty
- Community Growth and Expansion
- Livestock Grazing
- Special Status Species Management
- Wildland Fire Management
- Wildlife and Fish
- Cultural Resources, Heritage Resources, Native American Religious Concerns and Paleontological Resources Management
- Air Quality
- Soil and Water
- Wild Horse and Burro Management
- Public Safety
- Social and Economic Considerations
- Wild and Scenic Rivers
- Visual Resources

### What is Scoping?

- Early and open process for identifying actions, impacts, and issues that will be addressed in a NEPA document.
- Engages public, federal, state and local agencies, organizations and other stakeholder groups in the collaborative planning process.
- Helps the BLM identify planning issues
- Identifies related plans, documents and studies.

### Scoping Period

- Through February 11, 2011
- 8 Scoping Meetings
  - 1/20 – Reno
  - 1/24 – Battle Mountain
  - 1/25 – Eureka
  - 1/26 – Austin
  - 1/31 – Carvers / Hadley
  - 2/1 – Tonopah
  - 2/2 – Beatty
  - 2/3 – Dyer

### Who is helping BLM with the Revision?

- Public/Stakeholder Groups
- Cooperating Agencies (EPA, NDOW, NAS Fallon, Eureka County)
- RACs
- Contractor (EMPSi)

Steve Mellington state that it was not the subgroup's role to "ensure anything, but it is the subgroup's role to advise the BLM on RMP issues

### RAC Involvement – Roles & Responsibilities

- The RAC RMP Subgroup is to ensure that the range of alternatives for the DRAFT RMP/EIS is a reasonable and addresses specific groups' concerns.

### RAC RMP Subgroup Involvement

- Provide information on local community values and traditions
- Help maintain that representation during the RMP analysis/development
- Participate in Alternatives Development
- Review project documents
- May join project meetings and calls

### Next Steps

- Public comments due to BLM February 2011
- Scoping Summary available Summer 2011
- Develop draft alternatives Summer – Winter 2011

### How to Get Involved

- Submit comments through February 11, 2011 to Christopher Worthington
- Visit project website at:  
[http://www.blm.gov/nv/st/en/fo/battle\\_mountain\\_field/blm\\_information/rmp.html](http://www.blm.gov/nv/st/en/fo/battle_mountain_field/blm_information/rmp.html)

11:10 a.m. Comments from MOSO RAC.

Skip Canfield indicated that this RMP process sounds different than past (Ely and Southern Nevada), as the Battle Mountain RMP is asking for a significant amount of subgroup involvement up front than the Ely project asked required. Mary Jo indicated this has a lot to do with two districts being involved versus the Southern Nevada RMP, which was done only for its own district.

Chris Worthington indicated that he expects time commitments in the development of alternatives. However the RAC wants them to facilitate and structure this, BLM is very flexible.

Skip asked how RAC members will be kept in the loop and what their role is for this particular RMP as Battle Mountain may have a different vision of how the RAC will participate and their expectations. There was discussion amongst the group on how the RAC provided a letter of comment on the release of the RMP. Each district seems to have a different way of involving their respective RACs. Tom Seley works more in alternative development so more steps are needed or requested. It depends on the particular district's needs, which do vary. It was discussed that RAC members need to be notified as to what the specific expectations and processes are for the RAC. Battle Mountain staff and the contractor expressed a request for the RAC to provide them with comments as to how they would like to see management of the resource. As part of this, RAC members will receive drafts and feedback from the contractor and BLM along the way, with most of the communication being done via email on an individual resource basis. Comments will be accepted during the entire process, with the scoping process being more significant. The scoping report will be ready by early summer with alternatives development being ready by later summer. Skip Canfield stated that it is very important that proper facilitation be provided to the subgroup.

It was discussed how a secure website or SharePoint site could be set up for RAC members to access documents before comment periods.

A question was asked about travel costs for the RAC for the specific purpose of RMP support. The RMP budget would cover travel for RAC members to travel for this particular purpose. The funding is already in place for 2011.

11:20 a.m. Final Comments

Mike Herder discussed the importance of BLM to communicate its exact expectations from the RAC and be specific on what it would like them to focus on for input. If RAC members feel that this is lacking, he asked them to please communicate this to BLM. BLM must provide RAC members with specific instructions. Mary Jo indicated that BLM is committed to closing the loop with RAC members on all issues, which she stated will happen from this day forward.

Steve Mellington mentioned the importance of when discussing agenda items, BLM and RAC needs to ensure and make clear the significance of certain topics.

As a newly-appointed RAC member, Ed Weber thanked the group for making him feel so welcome at his first RAC event.

11:30 a.m. The MOSO RAC Breakout Session / Meeting was adjourned.