

Mojave-Southern Great Basin Resource Advisory Council  
Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday and Thursday, March 24 & 25, 2010  
BLM Southern Nevada District Office, 4701 N. Torrey Pines Drive, Las Vegas, NV

**Resource Advisory Council members present and category represented:**

Douglas “Stretch” Baker	Transportation and ROW	Category 1
Tim Carlson	Mineral Development	Category 1
Heather Love Fisher	Permitted Recreation	Category 1
Mauricia Baca	Environment	Category 2
Julie Von Tobel Gleason	Wild Horse and Burro	Category 2
Dr. John E. Hiatt, Chairperson	Wildlife	Category 2
Elise McAllister	Dispersed Recreation	Category 2
Greg Seymour	Archeology/Historic	Category 2
Don “Skip” Canfield	State Agency Representative	Category 3
Steven Mellington, vice-Chairperson	Public at Large	Category 3

**Resource Advisory Council members absent and category represented:**

Ed Higbee	Ranching/Grazing	Category 1
Gracian Uhalde	Ranching/Grazing	Category 1
Joni Eastley	Elected Official	Category 3
Kenny Anderson	Native American	Category 3
Dr. Peter Starkweather	Academic/UNLV	Category 3

**Bureau of Land Management (BLM) representatives present:**

Chris Hanefeld	BLM Ely District Public Affairs Specialist
Patricia Bute	BLM Ely District Secretary
Hillierie Patton	BLM Southern Nevada Public Affairs Specialist
Mary Jo Rugwell, Des. Federal Official	BLM Southern Nevada District Manager
Thomas Seley	BLM Tonopah Field Manager
Rosemary Thomas	BLM Ely District Manager
Carol Bass	BLM Ely District SNPLMA Coordinator
Mark Slaughter	BLM Southern Nevada District Office
Bob Ross	BLM Las Vegas Field Office Manager
Shonna Dooman	BLM Las Vegas Field Office Supervisory Geologist
Steve Tryon	BLM Assistant District Manager, SNPLMA

**Public**

Brad Hardenbrook	Nevada Department of Wildlife
Kyle C. Walton	Nye County
Mark Wallenmeyer	Clark County

**Public Continued**

Stephen Flemming  
Elizabeth Warren  
Ruth Rawlinson  
Phil Rawlinson

Goodsprings Historical Society & Yellow Pine Trail  
Old Spanish Trail Assn. & Goodsprings CAC  
Goodsprings CAC  
Goodsprings CAC

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 District Office of the BLM. Persons desiring to review said minutes should contact Chris Hanefeld, public affairs specialist, at (775) 289-1842.

Wednesday, March 24, 2010 Field Tour conducted. (agenda of field tour, attachment 1.)

Thursday, March 25, 2010 Meeting held at Southern Nevada District Office:

- 8:00 a.m. John Hiatt, Mojave-Southern Great Basin Resource Advisory Council (RAC) chairperson, called the meeting to order and conducted introductions.
- 8:10 a.m. Hillerie Patton, BLM Southern Nevada District Public Affairs Specialist, collected travel receipts and related information.
- 8:15 a.m. Public Comment. None.
- 8:30 a.m. District/Field Managers' reports:

Ely District Office, Rosemary Thomas, BLM Ely District Manager (attachment 2) Agencies will continue to take sage grouse into their decisions to determine impacts and conservation measures. Getting ready to enter into some internal coordination to discuss stipulations, etc. Will update you at each meeting since it is an evolving topic. Dr. Hiatt asked how to deal with SWIP corridor? Ms. Thomas stated that you will see baseline monitoring with potential triggers and adjustments. Yucca Mtn. – we have not received a letter of intent to relinquish the rail yet, but we expect to. Yucca Mtn. is closing shop. SNWA hydrologic models, peer review is being conducted and questions have arisen. SNWA has chosen to work on the models and it will cause a delay in the draft EIS. Will keep you informed on this topic as well at future meetings. Spring Valley Wind is our first wind project. The proponent is attempting to address issues and move towards EA instead of an EIS. Comparing gas to coal uses half the water. Emissions are significantly less with gas. Senator Reid's staff has been working in Lincoln County and Nye County to develop Mike Heizer's City into a national conservation easement of 600,000 acres.

Tonopah Field Office, Tom Seley, Tonopah Field Manager (attachment 3) Round Mountain Gold EIS is ready to be printed as soon as the documents are signed. Round Mountain Gold will have a trust fund associated with the project. Skip Canfield asked about potential of recreation with manmade lakes from mines? Something to consider for the future. Revelie Gather (233 horses) will occur on September 4 or thereabouts. Draft EA will go to the public. Renewable Energy in Battle Mountain area discussed. Working on Jersey Valley Geothermal Project should be approved in next 35-45 days or so. Continued excavation in Silver Peak area. RMP will take off like a rifle shot. Travel Management will be an issue. Need to address sensitive areas.

Southern Nevada District Office, Mary Jo Rugwell, BLM Southern Nevada District Manager provided verbally (no attachment). Upper Las Vegas wash draft EIS extended to May 21 due to request of local governments. Grand opening for Red Rock Visitor Center is April 10. End of comment period for EIS on Clark County Shooting Park conveyance ended Friday. Will allow for additional time for comments to arrive. Scoping period for public comments for RMP has closed and are now we will move on to the next phase. There will be a lot more opportunities for public comment as we are early in the process. Renewable energy is proceeding with an EIS for Solar Millennium, etc. Next Light and Searchlight Wind are also proceeding. All three projects are on the "fast track."

NEPA coordination with rural counties. Skip Canfield discussed the State Clearing House and their massive mailing list. Problem that field offices do not provide NEPA documents consistently to clearing houses. Need to get all of the info. so folks can comment. Need policy put in place. Ask that each office send an email to their staff asking that NEPA documents be sent to the Clearing House. Skip is the point of contact for the Clearing House. NSO Planning Coordinator should be contacted and asked that a policy be created. Rugwell offered to contact Brian Amme to make this request. Canfield will provide Clearing House information. Also, make sure websites are clear and concise on their NEPA listings. Ely's website is an excellent example.

9:00 a.m. Bob Ross and Shonna Dooman regarding Recreation Permitting/Staff Resources. Work on special recreation field permits. Desert racing is a big issue. Need consistency among offices in analysis of applications. What is BLM's responsibility to manage activities? What is the permittee's responsibility? This also affects cost recovery. Have begun to formulate district policy. Like to see several items addressed in the RMP revision. Asked for ideas from the RAC regarding concerns and interests in activities. Dooman commented that she would

like to focus on staff resources and what it takes to pull off one of these events. There are six ton truck and buggy races on the district and they take the most time. Staffing is a huge issue. Cost recovery for truck and buggy races are \$13,000 to \$15,000 for small events and larger are \$30,000 to \$35,000 per event. Need administrative person to assist us in our cost recovery efforts. Canfield asked if there is a standard list of conditions? Dooman stated that there is. Thru NEPA process, additional stipulations may be required. Policy established by office in 2005 needs to be readdressed. We need to look at what resources and offices can bear. Permitting these activities are exhausting per Rugwell. Hiatt thanked Rugwell for the tour but said that he was shocked by the tone and comments of BLM and their unadulterated support of off road races. It is important to address soil issues, etc. in an open and realistic manner. Need balance. Jean Dry Lake area is suffering continued degradation for instance. It will never recover in Hiatt's lifetime. Things are not getting better, but worse. We need to deal with these issues in the RMP. Off road racing needs to be conducted in an area where the soil can sustain it. It needs to be a controlled activity that does not allow for continued degradation of public lands. Rugwell stated that off road racing will be easier to deal with than inappropriate casual use. Once we have designations, we can begin to enforce them. It is important that the people that deal with these issues participate in the process. It will be a huge task, but we want to make an effort to get a handle on these issues. The OHV subgroup of the RAC could be beneficial in providing input into the RMP for OHV use. Love-Fisher suggested that we incorporate work on roads/trails on a volunteer basis from each promoter before each race. Incentive for repeat permitting after race is an important component as well for work on the course. BLM should monitor, but permittee should be responsible for course impacts, etc. There is a problem with enforcing requirements due to staffing, but Rugwell is hopeful that this will change. Canfield asked about stewardship programs to monitor these areas? There is a pilot program in the Logandale area beginning in the near future thru SNPLMA round 10. Stewardship programs still need to be overseen, but it will help. Role of site stewards discussed. Dooman said that we need the ability to enforce the stipulations that we impose on the permittee. It needs to be set forth specifically in the RMP. RAC suggests that adopting the standards and guidelines from the Ely RMP in to the Southern Nevada District RMP. *All RACs should look at standards and guidelines for RMPs for off road events so that everyone will be treated fair and consistently.*

BREAK.

10:15 Mark Slaughter, Wildlife Biologist. Biological Opinion Discussion. Individual section 7 consultation is now performed on high speed events to balance with desert tortoise recovery (attachment 4). We need to get out of doing consultation for each event. Course is swept for tortoise mortality after each event. Propose to remove high speed events in April, May and September in an attempt to reduce desert tortoise mortality. Working with other field offices to promote a united front. The jest is to remove the high speed racing events from the three most critical months for the desert tortoise. Formal consultation will come in May. Survey 25% of each course per year to find critical habitat/activity. If critical habitat is found before a race, the tortoise will be penned before the race for its safety. If take limit is exceeded in a pre-run, the race will need more mitigation measures before the race to prevent further take on the run. Hiatt asked about speed limitations? Twenty-five mph is the limit for travel on unposted dirt roads. There is not signage for this however. Need to look in to this. Also need to tell people to look/watch for tortoise.

10:40 Marilyn Peterson, Outdoor Recreation Planner re Recreation Area Management Plan (map provided – attachment 5). Public wants to know where they can go and what they can do. SRMA is a recreation emphasis area. RAMPS will address recreation needs for management areas, such as OHV staging areas, camping, trailheads, and interpretive displays. Have inventory of route of approximately 9,000 + miles, including width, use so that we may analyze. Need input from the RAC. Will do small RMP revisions along with the RAMPs to avoid being pre-decisional. Will look at timeframes. Southern Nevada OHV map will be of assistance to users for any mode of travel. May look at online map that is GPS friendly to assist people to stay on routes. Hiatt noted that there are management plans in place for wilderness areas. Peterson commented that those are general plans, but we will address issues outside the wilderness to accommodate use inside the wilderness. We will also address special use permits inside the wilderness. Hiatt commented on the potential for confusion due to so many things being done simultaneously. We need breakout of timelines. Liz Warren from Goodsprings said that there is no indication of desert tortoise relocation. Peterson commented that this map is not really intended for the public, but it will be taken into consideration. This map merely shows the planning area. The public map that is developed by the contractor will include the desert tortoise relocation area, etc. Warren also said that they didn't know that they were a SRMS in Good Springs. Apparently this has been in existence since 1995 when the RMP was written. If Good Springs doesn't want the SRMA classification, it can be addressed in the RMP. Warren would like more information in order to take back to her town council. Red Rock has its own

management area plan, which is not untypical. Plans emphasize activities specific to that area. You can have overlapping designations.

11:15 Erika Schumacher, SNDO Chief Ranger on Law Enforcement Perspective. Have staff of 17 rangers and 1 tech. There are currently three vacancies. Usually receive notification six months in advance of racing events. Most events require 6 to 10 officers. Will ask rangers from other districts to assist. Major concerns are health and safety. Biggest problem is establishing defined spectator areas. The promoter does not always have the ability to police the pit areas so sometimes the rangers need to do that. There was an instance where a ranger had to shut down a race due to infractions in the pit area. Also, making sure that terms and conditions are being followed in the B.O. Cost recovery takes care of expenses. Two use of force incidents in last month.

11:30 Megan Grossglass with Off Road Business Association (ORBA). Thanked everyone for allowing her to attend the tour yesterday. Looking forward to working with the BLM. ORBA is a trade association with a sole focus on land use. Provided letter regarding comments for consideration and inclusion in the scoping process of the revision of the LV RMP. Nevada is important to OHV recreation and ORBA recognizes this. The sport is growing exponentially. The BLM needs substantive comments in the RMP process. Need balance in resource protection. OHV users have the right to use public land, not abuse it. Need the tools to follow the rules. Grossglass feels that the OHV folks are not represented on the RAC. Grossglass would be happy to be the bridge to represent the OHV perspective. Elise McAlister commented that she represents dispersed recreation and understands the issues, but welcomes Grossglass's input as well. Hiatt also commented that there is an OHV subgroup that is being organized and will have OHV users as well. Grossglass feels that there are issues here and it needs to be addressed and OHV folks need to have a seat at this table. Hiatt said that one of the problems that the BLM has is that manufacturers use advertising to promote irresponsible use of public lands. Manufacturers could assist with promoting responsible use. Recommend that Grossglass take this back to her group and encourage the need for education. Grossglass welcomes the opportunity to speak before groups/organizations to inform of NEPA process, how to provide comments, etc.

WORKING LUNCH.

12:15 Clark County Air Quality Discussion - Louis Wallenmeyer. Discussion regarding qualifying for attainment status in the air quality world. In 1998 the RMP was

released and Mike Dwyer signed the closure order for the LV Valley and then came the OHV road closure. Landowners are on their own to enforce the road closure on their private land. We put the landowner on notice to address the issue and then they decide control measure. Our message is “Stay on the Trail” and Land Rover supports this and partners with us. We cannot waive fee for dust control permits, no matter what the purpose, entity, etc. is. That is unfortunate. As long as you are not moving soil or disturbing the land, you are not required to have a dust control permit, but please do have a water truck, etc. to keep the dust down. We are revising stationary source rules and permits are required. Corrosive ozone is mid level (level 3) in the Las Vegas Valley and is highest during the warmer temperatures. You will be hearing a lot more about ozone in the future. The entire State of Nevada does not meet ozone standards, but the majority of pollutants blow in from California. We also contribute to it by automobiles and that is difficult to control. Cleaner fuels and engines will help in the future. OHV registration start up costs are being offered by Clark County stakeholders to help with air quality issues. We are waiting for DMV to agree to move ahead with this offer. Solar One Project in Boulder City had been discovered to be a major source of benzene emission which is a hazardous material. The benzene release needs to be controlled. They have now developed a carbon bed that will absorb nearly all of the benzene. Have 18 enforcement officers in the LV Valley. The revenue from dust control permits has gone down by 24% in the past two years. Dust is a health hazard and is a real threat to our health. Carbon Monoxide exceedance has not occurred since 1998 in Clark County. Hiatt asked how do we deal with dust and OHV use off of the Jean Dry Lake? Wallenmeyer said it is not necessarily a race that is an issue; we can deal with that because we have requirements to water down dust, etc. The real problem is the dust that comes up afterwards from folks breaking up the dust on a continuous basis. We get dust from Owens Lake in California, Arizona, etc. We will continue to work on standards and guidelines for events. The race folks need to do what they are committed to in order to race. Best management practices should be implemented as well. Travel management needs to be implemented and has been successful in other States. Warren asked if Jean Dry Lake Dust is studied? Wallenmeyer said yes, it is dry lake sediments and they do not do chemical tests on the dusts. Warren feels that there are no attempts to minimize damage in the Jean Dry Lake.

12:45

Liz Warren, Nevada Director of the Old Spanish Trail Association. Environmental Advocacy Perspective. Wanted to talk about natural landscapes. The environments are natural and cultural. Six important issues related to OHV, including dust, erosion, noise, public safety, cultural. Old Spanish trail is a

natural historic trail that runs thru southern Nevada. “Rails to Trails” project out in Good Springs and issues that affect that area discussed. There are many dust issues and OHV issues. Good Springs is a town with inhabitants and they are highly affected by these issues. OHVs constantly cut across private land in order to go to the Good Springs bar. This needs to be addressed. There are safety issues here. Cultural and environmental issues regarding archaeological, cultural landscape are being disrupted by OHV traffic. Apply limited OHV access to dry lakes so that they can harden. Limited land use for Jean, Good Springs should be implemented. Why cannot we monitor air sheds? The quality of dust? Education would be a big help. It could begin in the schools so that we can understand our roles. Evaluate value of solutions. Will we be able to change uses? How do we monitor to see if the effort is worth it? We could use this information to manage recreation, energy projects, etc. Steve Flemming, President of Good Springs Historical Society then spoke regarding wash at Good Springs. Flemming read a letter regarding identifying trail corridor. A feasibility study has been conducted upon the trail corridor at the cost of \$160,000 which was SNPLMA funded. Asked that study area be removed from OHV traffic usage area and that races not be permitted in study area. It needs a special designation so that people are aware of recreation trail, which cannot withstand any more OHV use. Flemming asked that study area be identified on BLM maps with limitation of usage. Regulations need to be imposed to protect the trail and air quality.

1:35 p.m. SNPLMA Round 11 Proposed Projects – Steve Tryon. See handout – attachment 5. Strategic goals have been set. Have until April 28 or the RAC to comment on Round 11 SNPLMA recommendation. This recommendation needs to come in a form of a letter to Ron Wenker.

Land Acquisition accomplishments discussed.

Bob Ross discussed capital improvement projects and what was accomplished in 2009. BLM is moving forward to complete or close out stalled or delayed projects. Still have 65% of the projects that are still in progress. Some of the issues have been unrealistic time frames, scope, etc.

Steve Tryon discussed Conservation Initiatives and the 2009 accomplishments. Inventory, research, restorations, bat gates on abandoned mines, arch work, cultural work, etc. SNPLMA looks toward in kind contributions, not necessarily dollars.

One of the projects discussed that were not funded was “Interagency Law Enforcement” which requested funding for 27 law enforcement positions. This

will mean that the problems discussed in this morning's session regarding law enforcement will be exacerbated. If you want to comment on this regarding SNPLMA funding, you need to do so during the comment period.

Multiple Species Habitat discussed by Steve Tryon.

Eastern Nevada Landscape Restoration Projects discussed. Hiatt inquired why Priority 3 was funded and not Priority 4. Invasive weeds should receive more weight than PJ. This is where the RAC should comment to the executive committee.

Jeff Wilbanks for PTNA. 2009 highlight was Buckskin/Cliff Shadows Equestrian Park discussed.

McWilliams Campground proposal, a significant portion of that project includes adding flush toilets from vault toilets. These would be heated year around. Hiatt said this raises questions about winter usage, winter folks don't take as good of care of the facilities and may damage. It would be more prudent to upgrade to a high quality vault toilet that is more user friendly. You could save \$2 to \$3 million dollars. This recommendation should go to the Forest Service. This recommendation would also be included in the letter that we would send from the RAC re SNPLMA recommendations. We need to be prudent with monies.

*Recap – Asking RAC that by April 28 they provide a letter saying what projects they support/don't support in Round 11. If you have thoughts about existing projects, include that as well. Round 12 schedule is that the broad themes will be set by the end of May and will open this coming September. John Hiatt will send out a reminder and ask that people send him their suggestions and vice-versa; a letter will be drafted by Hiatt that includes that information.*

3:50 p.m. Need to follow up on OHV subgroup and begin having meetings. Land use planning is the topic for the next meeting to be held in Ely. McAllister is dispersed recreation, Love-Fischer is motorized recreation and Baca is going to serve as well as Hiatt.

*Recommend topic for next year – Ask site steward coordinators to come and talk to us about two programs that are going on. Clearly there are issues. When we are in LV next year, we will need to discuss this further.*

4:00 p.m. Chairman Hiatt adjourned the meeting.

APPROVED BY:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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

- Minutes provided by Patricia Bute, BLM Ely District Office -

Attachments:

1. Field Tour Agenda
2. BLM Ely District Manager's report
3. BLM Tonopah Field Manager's report
4. Desert Tortoise Recovery
5. Recreation Area Management