

Mojave-Southern Great Basin Resource Advisory Council

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, March 13, 2014

BLM Southern Nevada District Office, 4701 N. Torrey Pines Dr., Las Vegas, Nev.

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

Jason Higgins, Chairman	Energy & Minerals Development	Category 1
Robert Adams	Permitted Recreation	Category 1
Douglas "Stretch" Baker	Transportation/ROW	Category 1
Gracian Uhalde	Ranching/Grazing	Category 1
Elise McAlister	Dispersed Recreation	Category 2
Rhonda Hornbeck	Public at Large	Category 3
Stanley Smith	Academic/UNLV	Category 3

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

Ed Higbee	Ranching/Grazing	Category 1
Don Davis	Wild Horse and Burro	Category 2
Vacant	Environment	Category 2
Vacant	State Agency Representative	Category 3
Vacant	Native American	Category 3
Vacant	Elected Official	Category 3

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

Tim Smith, Des. Federal Official	BLM Southern Nevada District Manager
Mike Herder	BLM Ely Associate District Manager
Tim Coward	BLM Tonopah Acting Field Manager
Hillierie Patton	BLM SNDO Public Affairs Specialist
Mark Smith	BLM SNDO staff member
Gayle Marrs-Smith	BLM Las Vegas Field Manager
Robbie McAboy	BLM Red Rock/Sloan Assistant Field Manager
Vanessa Hice	BLM LVFO Assistant Field Manager
Shonna Dooman	BLM LVFO Assistant Field Manager, Resources
Elizabeth "Libby" White	BLM SNPLMA, Land Acquisition Program Mngr.

**Public**

Stephen Garcia	City of Henderson
Kurt Kuznicki	Friends of Nevada Wilderness
Mike Zaman	Pahrump

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.

9:00 a.m. Welcome & Introductions: Jason Higgins, RAC Chairman. The RAC members, BLM managers and staff introduced themselves.

9:15 a.m. Tim Smith and Jason Higgins discussed Roles and Responsibilities and the status of 2015 open positions and the approval process. Hillerie Patton briefed that the status of existing nominations was being verified weekly. Travel updates: Hillerie Patton briefed reimbursement requirements, lodging, travel, meals and incidentals.

9:30 a.m. Tim Smith opened the floor for nominations for Chairman. Bob Adams nominated Jason Higgins for Chairman. Stretch Baker seconded the nomination and a voice vote was taken in which the vote was unanimous in favor of Jason Higgins. The nomination for vice-chair was postponed for the a few minutes so other RAC members could attend via VTC.

Jason Higgins, Bob Adams and Rhonda Hornbeck discussed the vision of the MOSO-RAC and the importance of the work to be done in FY14 and beyond. Special notice was given to the Planning subcommittee in relation to the significant role they have in crafting inputs to the SNDO RMP. The opportunity to have a robust engagement in the creation of this 15 to 20 year plan is critical for the public's understanding of the direction of public land management in southern Nevada.

In regards to the Recreation subcommittee there are wonderful opportunities to include youth education. Especially in the areas of permitting and the requirements necessary to ensure that happens in accordance with established standards. Helping and informing the public in these areas fosters the trust between stewards on both sides.

Jason Higgins in discussing the upcoming subcommittee meeting in mid-May suggested we should be jumping into the RMP and looking at where we can make meaningful contributions. Then our June / July meeting can be set based on the timeline established in May. That Planning subcommittee meeting should plan now on being at least 6 to 8 hours. In order to prepare for the meeting of the full RAC later in July. That will be our big push for the rest of the year.

Bob Adams agreed and stressed that recreation continues to be an area that should be addressed. Rhonda Hornbeck seconded that with discussing that in Lincoln County recreation is a big issue. Decisions made in Clark County regarding closures often results in those folks wanting to utilize the public lands choosing to come to Lincoln County.

9:50 a.m. Elise McAllister brought forward 3 motions to consider from the subcommittee meeting.

Motion 1: Motion to discuss the BLM Southern Nevada District Office work with the RAC on a phased approach to produce an OHV youth

educational program with the short term/first phase to be developing a scope of work, finding a funding source, and submitting a grant application.

- After a brief discussion of the first motion Jason Higgins called for vote.

Voting Members all voted Aye.

Bob Adams  
Douglas Baker  
Rhonda Hornbeck  
Jason Higgins

Motion 2: Motion to request the BLM Public Affairs Specialist to work with the RAC and initiate an update to the RAC portion of the BLM website to expand member information, detail what the RACs role is, and to include information related to RAC outreach and education. (example is CA RAC website)

- It was agreed that members could be identified on the website but through name and category only. No personal information will be shared.

Voting Members all voted Aye.

Bob Adams  
Douglas Baker  
Rhonda Hornbeck  
Jason Higgins

Motion 3: Motion to request the BLM Public Affairs Specialist to work with the RAC to update the Recreation web page to include a brief checklist for how to begin a SRP process and to recommend that the BLM District Offices associated with the Mojave-Southern Great Basin RAC take outreach and education information to events the BLM is already covering (such as permitted events/races)

- The need to educate the public on the complexities involved and the lead time necessary to accomplish some of the processes that permitting requires.
  - It was decided that Shonna Dooman would work with the RAC on this and provide an outline at the next RAC meeting.

Voting Members all voted Aye.

Jason Higgins  
Bob Adams  
Douglas Baker

Ronda Hornbeck

- 10:15 a.m. With a quorum available the discussion went to nominations of the Chair and Vice-Chair.
- Jason Higgins was the nominee for Chair and the vote was unanimous for Jason.
  - The floor opened for vice-chair and Robert Adams was nominated and the vote was unanimous.
    - Jason Higgins: Chairman
    - Robert Adams: Vice Chairman

- 10:30 a.m. Hillerie Patton brought up that Terri Robertson was still recovering and might be for some time and that meant we had a sub-committee chair that was essentially empty. The decision was agreed upon to table that until the mid-July meeting to check the status then. Jason Higgins brought up the need for someone to review the RMP in June on their behalf. Bob Adams volunteered.

Planning was opened for discussion by Jason:

Bob Adams made the suggestion to develop a volunteer data base similar to what Outdoor Las Vegas utilizes now.

- 10:45 a.m. Jason Higgins called for a Break and reminded everyone that Public Comment would open at 11:00 am.

11:00 a.m. Public Comment:

Rhea Little: Speaking on behalf of the Spring Mountain Alliance on wild horse:

- She briefed the board on the groups desire to see the BLM embrace darting as a means to control the wild horse population. She discussed the efficiency of such a program and the Alliance's desire to help with volunteers who would assist. She suggested the cost would not be prohibitive and thought it could be done for between \$20k to \$25k.
- Hillerie Patton spoke with them about reaching out to our WH&B specialist Krystal Johnson who is assigned to the Pahrump Field Office.

John Lopez: Speaking on behalf of the City of Las Vegas

- John is the Government Affairs Manager for Las Vegas and emphasized his desire to work with the board in whatever capacity could be developed. With specific interest in the LV Wash and Tule Springs areas.

- 11:20 a.m. With the Public Comment period closed Jason Higgins asked what constitutes a good comment for a document like the RMP. Tim Smith took this question. A good comment not only identifies a problem or desire but also a workable solution. Experience has shown that often group like a RAC working with experts inside and outside the BLM do this by engaging in meaningful discourse and study before submitting. Form letters are what is most often used but usually

offer little in the way of substantive solutions. Although they can be used to measure public sentiment on an issue.

11:30 a.m. The RAC broke for lunch, returning at 12:30 p.m.

12:30 p.m. Jason Higgins reconvened the Board and introduced Lee Kirk:

- Lee started with an overview of how the RMP got to the point we are today and his role in that process. He discussed the fact that what was working would be carried over into the new RMP. The work that was going into the VRM and the related classes 1 – 4. The analysis on ACECs and impact of things like utility corridors would have. He discussed lands and realty, recreation, rivers, travel management, minerals and Lands with Wilderness Characteristic's.
- Jason Higgins asked if someone could briefly describe what Lands with Wilderness Characteristics were.
- Tim Smith suggested we think of wilderness as a resource and managing it as a resource.
- Trail closures were discussed and Lee stated that any closure would still have to go through the normal process. But that they were not doing any travel management at this time.
- Ronda Hornbeck asked about firefighting. Lee stated that it would be managed to protect and that fire has its own management prescriptions. She went on to urge the BLM to be careful in any wording that might limit the opportunity to act.
- Elise McAllister
  - Asked if the RAMP and Travel Management was also being done at the time. Lee stated no, that would start after the RMP was completed.
  - Tim reminded the group that when the Leadership Team made the decision to pullout from the contractor Lee was starting almost completely from scratch on the project. Since that time he has worked tirelessly to get us back on track and set a goal for completion which was very aggressive.
  - The group all applauded the hard work that has gone into such an important document.

1:15p.m. The District Manager Reports were next and each DM or representative presented a report on their respective districts. Please see the handouts for those notes.

Mike Herder presented for the Ely District.

Tim Coward presented for the Tonopah District.

Tim Smith presented for the Southern Nevada District Office.

Ronda Hornbeck asked Tim Smith the status of the Searchlight Wind Energy project. He stated that at this time there was no development, but that there were some litigation issues be worked on.

Jason Higgins in bringing up the Rails to Trails program informed the board that SCOTUS has sided with lands owners vs the government. He further discussed the history of railroads on public lands.

2:00 p.m. The RAC agreed that the recreation and planning subcommittees would meet again prior to the next RAC Board. The next RAC meeting would be scheduled from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Thursday, July 17, with details to be arranged prior.

2:15 p.m. ADJOURN

APPROVED BY:

Date: 17 July 2014

  
Jason Higgins, Chair  
Mojave-Southern Great Basin  
Resource Advisory Council

- Minutes provided by Mark Smith, Southern Nevada District Office -

Attachments:

1. Recreation Subgroup's Motions
2. Ely District Manager's Report
3. Tonopah District Manager's Report presented by Tim Coward
4. Southern Nevada District Office Manager's Report