

RAC Minutes
September 15-16, 2009
Southern Utah University
Cedar City, Utah

September 15, 2009

RAC members in attendance: Carl Albrecht, Fran Amendola, Lowell Braxton, Ray Bloxham, Ashley Korenblat, Riley Cutler, Val Payne, Dell LeFevre

RAC members not in attendance: Frank White, Jerry Spangler, Chuck Hawley, Fee Busby, Paul Jacobs, and Manuel Morgan

BLM employees in attendance: Selma Sierra (State Director), Sherry Foot, Todd Christensen, Al McKee, Chris Hite, Rob Wilson, Christine Pontarolo, Randy Trujillo, Lauren Mermejo, and Paul Briggs

Others in attendance: Senator Dennis Stowell; Chad Johnson, Beaver County Commissioner; Alma Adams, Iron County Commissioner; Jim Bowns, Professor, USU; and, Tiffany Bartz, SUWA

Welcome: RAC Coordinator, Sherry Foot, welcomed members and guests and discussed agenda/housekeeping items. Todd Christensen, Color Country District Manager, welcomed guests and gave highlights of the district projects (handouts provided) and an overview of the field tour.

Geothermal 101 (Al McKee): (Powerpoint presentation made available upon request). Presentation topics included: Geothermal Resources Background, Utilization Facilities, BLM Roles and Responsibilities, Leasing under Energy Policy Act of 2005, Geothermal Statistics, and Utah Renewable Energy Zone.

Status of Geothermal Resources (SW Utah)-(Chris Hite): (handout available upon request). Power Generation – North of Milford, west face of Mineral Mountains, Beaver County--PacifiCorp's Blundell Plant (BLM); Southwest of Minersville, Escalante Desert, Beaver County—Raser Technologies' Thermo 1 Plant (Private and State); Southeast of I15-I70 interchange, Beaver County—Enel's Cove Fort/Sulphurdale development (BLM, FS, and Private)

Direct Uses – Newcastle, Iron County—Milgro Greenhouses (Private), Castlevallye Greenhouses (Private), and Newcastle LDS Wardhouse (Private); Cedar City, Iron County—Canyon View High School (Private); Monroe, Sevier County—Mystic Hot Springs (Private); Hurricane, Washington County—Pah Tempe Mineral Hot Springs (Private); and, Veyo, Washington County—Vey Pool Resort (Private)

Status Wind Energy/Solar Study Units (SW Utah) – (Rob Wilson): (handouts/maps available upon request). One authorized wind development project – First Wind: Milford Wind Corridor.

Two pending wind development projects (applications received by the BLM) – enXco Development Corporation: Mineral Mountain Wind Development Facility and Wasatch Wind: Harmony Mountain Wind Development Facility.

Additional information on these projects can be found at <http://www.blm.gov/ut/st/en/info/nepa/enbb.html>

Three authorized wind testing short-term grants: enXco Development Corp, UPC Wind, Wasatch Wind

Nine pending wind testing short-term grants: enXco Development Corp, Evergreen Wind, Wasatch Wind – 3 sites (Milford South, Enterprise East, Pine Valley Needles Range), Mormon Mesa, Ridgeline Energy, Energy Unlimited, Enel

Major Electrical Transmission Lines: Three pending major transmission line projects (Sigurd to Red Butte 345 kV Electric Transmission Line, PacifiCorp: Energy Gateway South, Transwest Express

Additional information on these projects can be found at:
http://www.blm.gov/ut/st/en/fo/cedar_city/planning/sigurd_to_red_butte.html
<http://www.pacificorp.com/Article/Article89859.html>
<http://www.transwestexpress.net/>

Solar Energy Development Programmatic EIS and Solar Study Areas: The PEIS is being prepared by the DOE, Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Program, DOI, and the BLM.

The PEIS will also identify and analyze Solar Energy Study Areas located in N, AZ, CA, CO, NM, and UT. It will encompass about 670,000 acres. Only lands with excellent solar resources, suitable slope, proximity to roads and transmission lines or designated corridors, and containing at least 2,000 acres of BLM-administered lands were considered for solar energy study areas. Sensitive lands, wilderness and other high-conservation-value lands were excluded.

Utah has three solar energy study areas: Wah Wah Valley, Milford Flats South area west of Minersville, and Escalante Valley.

Additional information on these projects can be found at: <http://www.solareis.anl.gov/>

Effects on Wildlife from Renewable Energy Development (Christine Pontarolo): (powerpoint presentation available upon request). In 2007, the BLM's Cedar City Field Office received an application for a Wind Energy Facility (wind energy facility and transmission line) in Beaver and Millard Counties, Utah. Baseline avian surveys were conducted to characterize the breeding and migratory species using the project area (raptor nest survey, burrowing owl survey, avian point count survey, long-billed curlew survey). Raptor Nest Survey: a total of 196 nests were identified. No raptor nests were recorded within ½ mile of the proposed wind energy facility. All documented raptor nests were along the proposed transmission line route. Burrowing Owl Survey: Pedestrian surveys were conducted in April, 2008. Surveyors walked evenly spaced

transects and covered ¼ mile on both sides of the turbine arrays. A total of 20 burrows were classified as active burrowing owl burrows. Avian Point Count Survey: Objective is to document the changes in avian richness and abundance over time and space as a result of wind energy activities (pre- and post- construction). A total of 8 transects were established throughout the wind energy facility within shrub-steppe, grassland, and salt desert scrub habitat types. Long-Billed Curlew Survey: A total of 17 point count stations were established within the wind energy facility. Point count stations were approx. 1600 meters apart and were located on or near established roads. A total of 23 long-billed curlews and one active nest were observed during the survey period.

What's Addressed in the RMPs (related to renewable energy)-(Lauren Mermejo): August 7, 2009, Bob Abbey was confirmed by the Senate as the new director of BLM. Abbey is a big proponent of renewable energy and hopes to help Nevada and other western states become major sources of solar, wind, and geothermal power. He sees his role as encouraging this development while ensuring that the impact on the environment and endangered species is minimal.

Utah completed six land use plans in October/November 2008. BLM's Vernal Field Office has the only major renewable resource--geothermal. Wind—West Desert.

Program Specific and Resource Specific Decision Guidance from the latest Planning Handbook (located on Utah BLM's web site):

Surface disturbance, transmission infrastructure and visual impairment
BLM and Department of Energy jointly completing Solar EIS

1. Natural, Biological, and Cultural Resources. Air quality and climate change; soil and geologic resources; water; vegetation; cultural resources; paleontology; visual resources; noise, special status species; fish and wildlife; wild horses and burros; and fire management
2. Resources Uses. Forestry; livestock grazing; recreation; lands and realty; coal and oil shale; and fluid minerals
3. Special Designations. Congressional designations; Administrative designations
4. Socio-Economic Resources. Local planning-County plan conformance; environmental justice; health and safety; and hazardous materials and waste management

Comments and Concerns by State/Local Officials: Commissioner Johnson (Beaver County). We have a good working relationship with the local BLM office. The positives of the renewable energy projects (wind farm and geothermal) – created jobs. Local processes involved – economics affected. There were no negative comments made from the citizens during the public hearings. County understands there will be impacts to lands and county roads; however, members of the public request to go and see these various projects. Reseeding of the Milford Flat Fire is starting to come back.

Commissioner Adams (Iron County). Tremendous amount of geothermal resources in Iron County. Would like Raser Technologies to consider Iron County. Multiple use is supreme. Concerns with oil and gas drilling lease problems. Pursue domestic energy resources. There is a need for fire fuels reduction and treatment.

Senator Stowell (Represents Senate District #28). He is a member of the UREZ committee. Phase 2 of report which will add economics. Good for Beaver County. Needs to develop what they have. Good jobs (living wage) in Beaver County. Jobs have little impact on the land. Let's temper what we do with a little common sense. Garkane Power – thought they had all the permits needed – didn't realize there were sensitive species. Renewable Portfolio Standard for Utah – 20% renewable energy by 2025—tempering it to Utah with common sense. Supported training center in Milford. Concerned that renewable energy system is needed in Ticaboo. Bullfrog Marina putting in solar power energy. He appreciates the BLM and their cooperation.

Riley Cutler (for Mary Ann Wright – State Planning Office). She is member of the Utah Renewable Energy Zone Task Force. The report is online at:
http://geology.utah.gov/sep/renewable_energy/urez/index.htm

Who: Twenty-member task force appointed by the Governor

What: Phase I identified areas that have the theoretical potential to become Renewable Energy Zones. Objectives for UREZ Task Force Phase II are to identify policies or market mechanisms that facilitate transmission planning and permitting for renewable energy projects; quantify cost-effective generation potential; and identify necessary transmission to bring resources to market.

When: Meetings conducted or will be conducted from 5/09 – 9/09

Why: Utah is looking at its potential to meet energy expansion needs of the future. While coal, oil and gas currently supply the majority of the power in Utah. A goal has been set to have renewable energy comprise 20% of the energy portfolio by 2025. Projections show that this will be about the amount needed for base case scenarios of growth in Utah.

Public Comments: None

Update on Milford Flat Fire Rehab Project (powerpoint presentation) – (Paul Briggs): (powerpoint presentation). Fire occurred in July, 2007. A team of partners (Utah Partners for Conservation and Development) was formed to provide solutions to conservation issues with regard to the Milford Flat Fire. This partnership effort was phenomenal. Number one priority was wind erosion. Efforts were done to stabilize the site to prevent erosion, establish certain grass species. Decision was made to aerial seed and chain—results in better emerging stabilization effort. This project was recognized by the Secretary of Interior, Ken Salazar in May, 2009.

Next Meeting Date/Location/Adjourn: A meeting is being considered for January, 2010, in St. George, Utah. This will coincide with a RecRAC meeting (which are to be held twice a year—January and June). Topics of interest are: RecRAC Meeting – fee presentations; RAC Meeting—NCAs (site tour of areas), educational tools, Uintah County/Grand County Land Exchange, SITLA issues with T&E species and land exchanges, Washington County Bill

(lessons learned from BLM's perspective, County Commissioners' perspective and SITLA's perspective).

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting (from Ashley Korenblat); Ray Bloxham seconded. Meeting adjourned 6:10 p.m.

September 16, 2009

The RAC toured the following renewable resources sites:

Raser Technologies (geothermal-modular units):

Mildford Wind Corridor – First Wind (Clipper and GE turbines, substation, operation and maintenance facility, lay-down yards):

Pacificorp's Blundell Powerplant (geothermal, production plant-turbine, heat exchangers):

An optional field tour of the Milford Flat Fire Rehab project was led by Paul Briggs.

Approved: _____ Lowell P. Braxton _____
RAC Chairperson

Date: _____ 09-29-09 _____