

RAC/RecRAC Meeting

March 28, 2012

Little America Hotel, 500 South Main, Salt Lake City, UT

Wyoming Conference Room (First Floor)

Wednesday, March 28, 2012

RAC members in attendance: Bill Hopkin, Frank White, Carl Albrecht, Lowell Braxton, Ray Bloxham, Stu Sprouse, Jim Allison, Jim Catlin, Steve Burr, James Nelson, Ted Zimmerman, LuAnn Adams

RAC members not in attendance: John Malechek and Bryan Harris

BLM employees: Shelley Smith, Juan Palma, Amber Roller, Sherry Foot, Jill Silvey

Welcome/Introduction /Election of Officers

Sherry Foot

Elected Chairperson: Lowell Braxton

Elected Vice Chair: Bill Hopkin

RAC Orientation

Sherry Foot

- Discussed council expectations
- Council composition
- Resource Advisory Council service terms
- Ethics
- Meeting Procedures (Meet 2-4 times annually, open to the public)
- Federal Register Notice published 30 days in advance of meeting
- Decision Making – At least 3 members of each interest group must be present to constitute a quorum and to conduct an official meeting
- Designated Federal Officer (DFO) Role
- Chairperson expectations
- Mechanics: Orientation Materials available online, Current Membership, Subgroups, Technical Review Team, Travel
- PowerPoint will be available upon request

What's Happening in BLM Utah

Juan Palma

1. BLM State Director conducted a partner recognition for the Utah Biomass Resources Group. Darren McAvoy accepted the award on behalf of the group.
2. Oil and Gas: There are a number of projects being brought forward. GASCO natural gas project-1300 proposed new wells. Anadarko (Greater Natural Buttes) 3600 proposed new wells. Working closely with Fish and Wildlife Service. Promotion of job creation
3. Working on an MOU (*Establishment of a Utah Energy Development Action Team*) between the DOI Secretary and Utah Governor to resolve some of the issues before us. Met with Amanda Smith, DEQ on March 27th. RAC will be provided a copy of the MOU to review.

4. Oil and Gas provides revenue to local counties and state. There is an improvement of Application for Permit to Drill (APDs) (approval of the drill rig to show up to the site and start drilling) being issued.
5. Energy: Transmission lines and corridors to move the energy across the grid. TransWest transmission line is critical project right now to move energy from point A to point B. Several proposals have been made but no decisions have been made to present to the public.
6. Working toward issuing a lease for the Greens Hollow tract which would extend the SUFCO Mine life, in Sevier County, where Fishlake Forest and Manti La Sal meet. FS working on an EIS. BLM cannot move forward with issuing the lease without consent from the surface management agency, i.e. Forest Service.
7. Grazing: 1500 grazing allotments. Working on EIS for the GSENM for the better part of 10 years. Brought in national riparian team to meet with local county officials, ranchers, citizens, and environmental community to discuss the issues on grazing. SD was recommended to consider the following: lack of trust, miscommunication, misconception, and create a forum for principals to have a facilitated discussion. Jill Silvey, SLFO Manager in the WDD working on the Three Creeks Allotments.
8. RS2477: State has filed a Notice of Intent (NOI) to sue regarding 20,000 roads. Only one road has been adjudicated, Burr Trail. Iron County pilot project was created in 2010 to bring all the stakeholders to the table and to discuss the roads issues and create an agreement in Iron County (Title V) on all roads in Utah. RAC to help SD with a path forward on resolving this issue with the BLM. In the past, RAC helped write the Instruction Memorandum (IM) on how BLM Utah will survey roads in the state.
9. Recreation: Tourism in Utah is part of the financial portfolio of Utah's local counties and communities and taps into the resources as it relates to tourism market. Increase financial stability in local communities. Garfield and Kane county commissioner partnership to pilot a project with university experts to take a large land scale with the eye of tourism with a sustainable approach. Visit with the local people, discuss tourism and what they would like to see and not see, develop some initiatives and this allows for community understanding and acceptance.

Questions:

How does the tourism you describe relate to resource management? Monument has a plan for cross purposes or an amendment of the RMP recommended by the appreciative inquiry. Juan challenges RAC to take on these issues and be empowered to talk about them and seek to find resolutions.

Who is the authorized entity to agree on the 90% of the roads? The Field Office managers are the authorized entities.

Can the BLM grant a ROW to the county (Title V)? Yes, we can and we have.

Recreation Fee Refresher

Aaron Curtis, BLM & Joanna Wilson, FS

Summarize BLM and FS recreation fee programs

- BLM collected almost \$3 million dollars in recreation fees in FY11
- Recreation Enhancement Act (REA) authorizes agencies to collect rec fees through the end of 2014
- Criteria is established where rec fees can be collected and how they can be spent.

- Requires public outreach prior to changing rec fees, Recreation RACs, America the Beautiful Pass

Summarize REA

General guidelines are established when fees can be collected

The Law that authorizes the collection of rec fees through the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (REA)

1. Standard Amenity Fees-examples are interpretive centers, day use sites, recreation area
2. Expanded Amenity Fees-examples are developed campgrounds, cabin rentals, day use or overnight sites, hookups, dump stations
3. Special Recreation Permits-“Specialized recreation uses of Federal recreational lands and waters, such as group activities, recreation events, motorized recreational vehicle use.”
Example: Utah BLM has seven special areas where a permit system is needed, (i.e. Little Sahara, West Water Canyon, Christmas Tree permits)
4. Prohibits the collection of entrance fees, amenity fees for under age 16, parking along roads and trails, overlooks and scenic pullouts, pass-through travel
5. Fee rates are established by estimating operating site costs. There is a “Fee Tool” that develops price range depending what amenities is located at that site.

How can the money be used?

- Visitor Services
- Habitat Restoration
- Repair, Maintenance, and Facility Enhancement
- Visitor Reservation Services
- Law Enforcement
- Costs of Collection

Recreation RAC Duties

Make recommendations to the agencies on the following fee program components:

- Establishing or eliminating recreation fees;
- Modifying existing fees; and
- Expand or limit the recreation fee programs

Point of Contacts:

Aaron Curtis, BLM Utah State Office

acurtis@blm.gov

801-539-4225

Joanna Wilson, Forest Service Intermountain Region

Jwilson08@fs.fed.us

801-625-5152

Steve Burr volunteered to become the REA Work Coordinator for the RAC/RecRAC when Ray Bloxham’s term has expired.

Fee Proposals

1. Forest Service Fee Proposal

Cheryl Probert, Deputy Forest Supervisor, Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest Handouts:

Recreation Program Fee Accomplishment Report 2011

Intermountain Region Informational Paper for Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest and Ashley National Forest

Cheryl, Forest Service gave an overview of the American Fork Canyon and Mirror Lake Scenic Byway fee proposal changes

Ashley National Forest, Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area (NRA)

Joanna Wilson handed out a briefing paper on the language change for the NRA to go from an “area” to “fee sites.” This is merely a language change, no new or fee increases.

BLM Fee Proposal

Aaron Curtis

Moab Field Office Westwater Canyon of the Colorado River

Handouts: Powerpoint - Westwater Canyon Fee Area

Proposal to increase the existing \$7.00 rate per-person-per-trip fee to \$10.00.

Fee last raised in 1998

Includes both put-in and take-out facilities

No lottery or application fees

“No Action” would likely be a reduction in on-site visitor services, which could lead to:

Reduced visitor safety

Increased environmental impacts and less primitive boating experience

Degradation of facilities

Proposal to the RecRAC: BLM Moab Field Office is requesting the Utah Recreation RAC to provide a recommendation on the proposal to increase the Westwater per-person-per-trip Special Recreation permit fee from \$7.00 to \$10.00, effective March 1, 2013.

Discussion: Only six public comments received, so the fee doesn't seem to impact the public.

Decision: Motion to move the fee to \$10.00 and collaborate with BLM Colorado and explore raising the fee higher. Motion was moved and seconded. Passed unanimously.

Public Comment Period

Lowell Braxton

Jack Johnston, Utah Four-Wheel Drive Association

Advocates roads being available to OHV users and the cooperation of all stakeholders. Utah 4-Wheel Drive Assn is changing its philosophy to one of cautious optimism and cooperation in the

future. They are hoping that trails will be reopened to 4x4 use. BLM has a legal responsibility for its multiple-use mission.

Evan Day, Rock Hound Club

Casual collecting of minerals. His group advocates responsibility collecting of minerals and they strive to police themselves to follow the policies BLM has set in place.

Written Comment – Carla Bowers, WH/B

Provided written statistics on the Herd Management Areas (HMAs) Herd Sizes at High AML (Appropriate Management Level) as of 2/18/11 BLM Herd Area Statistics.

Written comment on the National Picture (Some Perspectives, Numbers, Questions & Recommendations).

The RAC, State Director, and WH/B State Office Lead were given copies of the written comments for their information. Nothing further was discussed regarding these comments at this time.

Energy (Renewable/Fossil Fuels) Copy of powerpoint available upon request.

Kent Hoffman

Secretary Salazar's Order 3285 established Policy to:

- Encourage Production, Development, and Delivery of Renewable Energy as a DOI High Priority
- Work collaboratively with other Federal, State, and local govts.
- BLM and State agreed to create the Utah Energy Action Teams

Utah Energy Action Team:

- Drafting an MOU between DOI and Utah to further the goals of Sec. Order 3285
- Goal to meet timely and often and share drafts

Discussed:

- Conventional Energy Update: Oil and Gas Projects (2011-2015)
- Utah BLM –O&G Leasing
- Applications for Permit to Drill Status
- Conventional Energy Projects
- Unconventional Energy Update: Oil Shale & Tar Sands
 - ENEFIT America Property Boundaries
- Renewable Energy Update: Wind Energy Projects in Mineral Mountain and the Milford Wind Corridor
- Solar PEIS out for review currently
- Geothermal leases have been deferred but interest of expanding
 - Hill AFB/INL/UGS Geothermal Resource Exploration Project
- Summary
 - Substantial Energy Dev. Statewide
 - Energy projects require multiple permit approvals from state, Federal, and local govts.

- Early interagency coordination can reduce permitting timelines, collaboratively address key issues and help lessen impacts associated with project siting, construction and operation

Remarks: Jim Catlin, Wild Utah Project, shared his energy development document *Best Management Practices for Citing, Developing, Operating and Monitoring Renewable Energy in the Intermountain West* (No action required)

**Cedar City Resource Management Plan (RMP) Todd Christensen
RMP process; Where are we now; Where are we headed; How can the RAC become involved**

Todd very excited to report recent Sage-grouse sitings which indicate large projects are key to success. Sitings in Beaver, Kane and Garfield Counties. Handout distributed

Major Issues

Rangeland Health
Renewable Energy
Sage Grouse Habitat
Lands with Wilderness Character
OHV use and land use plan designations
Dispersed Recreation
Special Designations (ACECs, WSRs, NCAs)

**Cedar City RMP Elizabeth Burghardt, Cedar City Field Office Manager
Planning area covers 3,754,692 acres**

Existing Land Use Plans

- Pinyon MFP-1983 (western)
- Cedar Beaver Garfield Antimony RMP-1986 (eastern)
 - Outdated management actions
 - No travel management plan – 97% of the Field Office is open to cross country travel
 - No ACEC's
 - Never been evaluated for Wild and Scenic Rivers

Issues not addressed in existing plans

- Renewable energy development
- Lands with Wilderness Character
- Climate change
- Increased population of OHV use

Estimated Completion Dates

- Initial scoping (completed)
- Analysis of the mgmt. situation (Spring 2012)
- Alternative development (Fall 2012)

- Draft EIS (Fall 2013)
- Proposed RMP/Final EIS (Fall 2014)
- ROD/Final RMP (2015)
- Transportation Plan (2020)

*Lowell Braxton: Proposed when alternatives are drafted, Cedar City would present the draft to RAC to allow interactive discussions and allow for comment prior to releasing document to the public. Field tour to the site in the Fall 2012

Major scoping Issues

- Transportation
- Wild horses
 - Conflicts with livestock operations
- Lands with Wilderness Character
- Special Status Species
 - Utah Prairie Dog
 - Greater Sage Grouse
- Special Designations
 - ACECs
 - Wild and Scenic Rivers

Cooperating Agency Agreements

- State of Utah
- Beaver and Iron Counties
- Dixie and Fishlake National Forests
- Zion National Park
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife
- Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah and Hopi Tribe

Public Comment Period

Draft EIS

- NOA published Fall 2013
- 90-day comment period
- Public meetings in Cedar City, Beaver, Salt Lake City

Proposed RMP/Final EIS

- NOA published FY2014
- 30-day protest period
- 60-day Governor's consistency review period

Who to contact for more information: Gina Ginouves, Planner 435-865-3011, gginouve@blm.gov

St. George Field Office RMP

Jimmy Tyree, St. George Field Office Manager

Total Acres in Planning Area 1,582,900

RMP/EIS

- Red Cliffs NCA
- Beaver Dam Wash NCA

Cooperating and Assisting Agencies

- State of Utah
- Washington County
- Mojave County
- U.S. FWS

Public Comment Periods

- Draft EIS NOA published Winter 2013
- 90-day comment period
- Public meetings in St. George, Hurricane and Salt Lake City

Proposed RMP/Final EIS

- Notice of availability published late 2013
- 30-day protest period
- 60-day Governor's consistency review period

Transportation Planning

- OHV designations in plan amendment
- Transportation Management Plan

Who to contact for more information Keith Rigrup, Planning, 435-865-3063, krigrup@blm.gov

*RAC is invited to the NCA (Red Cliffs and Beaver Dam Wash) Dedication Thursday, October 12, 2012 in St. George, UT

Sage Grouse

Quincy Bahr & Steve Madsen

Presentation on Planning Strategy

Quincy Bahr

Population Trends

- Estimated decline of 80-90% decrease from pre-settlement numbers

Endangered Species Act Listing Status

- FY2015 – Court ordered deadline for sage-grouse final listing decision

USFWS identified factors BLM could address

- Inadequate regulatory mechanisms on Federal lands has not been effective at addressing threats and were identified as a major factor in “warranted but precluded” finding
- Principal regulatory mechanism for BLM and USFS is conservation measures contained in Land Use Plans (LUPs).
- Conservation measures are currently applied inconsistently across the range

Planning Strategy and Approach

- BLM’s objective is to conserve sage grouse and its habitat and avoid ESA listing
- Issue national policy and direction to guide interim actions (IM-2012-043) and future planning (IM-2012-044)
- Public scoping complete – Second Quarter of FY 12
- Draft EISs published – Second Quarter of FY 13
- Final EISs published – First Quarter of FY 14
- Records of Decision signed – Fourth Quarter of FY 14

Stakeholder Involvement

- Planning teams include FWS, state wildlife agencies, and USFS as cooperating agencies
- Tribal, Federal, state, and local agencies have been invited to participate as cooperating agencies
- Additional National and Regional stakeholder briefings are ongoing (e.g., Sage Grouse Local Working Groups, SUPAC)

Land Use Planning Effort

Existing land use planning decisions that could be amended may include:

- Mineral management
- Lands and realty
- Travel and transportation
- Wild horses and burros
- Vegetation management
- Habitat restoration
- Range management
- Vegetation management
- Wildland fire management

Input to Alternatives Development

- No Action
- State of Utah’s Governor’s Sage-Grouse working group
- Coordination with county plans
- 10 local working group conservation plans
- NTT Report
- Scoping-based issues/alternatives
- Grazing alternatives must provide a full range of options including no grazing, current grazing, possibly reduced grazing or possibly increased grazing

Next for Planning

- Analyze scoping comments
- Prepare and release scoping report
- Finalize cooperating agency relationships
- Consolidate no action alternative
- Prepare range of alternatives
- Gather information for cumulative analysis

Interim Management of Greater Sage Grouse Habitat

Steve Madsen

WOIM 2012-043 Greater Sage-grouse Interim Management Policies and Procedures

- Designed to minimize habitat loss during the RMP amendment process
- Complete by Sept. 2014 and this IM would terminate
- Reduce likelihood that it will be listed as an endangered species
- Provides interim conservation policies and procedures to be applied in PPH for a variety of BLM authorized actions:
 - Vegetation management
 - Wildfire suppression
 - Rights-of-Way actions
 - Leaseable Minerals (coal, oil, and gas)
 - Water developments
 - Travel management
 - Grazing

4:15 Conclusion

Next Meeting Date: August 7&8

Location: St. George or Cedar City

Agenda Topics:

RS2477 road issue (discussion on what to do, where we are, Iron County's perspective)
American Fork/Mirror Lake FS Fee Proposals
RAC input to the Cedar City / St. George RMP (Alternative Development)
Steve Burr - Report on Monument Advisory Committee "Appreciative Inquiry and Perspective" Presentation
Field Trip in the Fall

Approved: _____/s/ Lowell Braxton_____
RAC Chairperson

Dated: _____April 10, 2012_____