

Summary Minutes
Farmington District Resource Advisory Council Meeting
May 9 and 10, 2016
Farmington, New Mexico

May 9 attendees

RAC Members:

Norman Norvelle (Category 3)
Jude Gabaldon (Category 1)
Jerry Sims (Category 2)
Myke Lane (Category 1)
Anthony Benson (Category 3)
Martha Brown (Category 2)
Mick O'Neill (Category 2)
Wendy Hageman (Category 3)
Theresa Pasqual (Category 3)

BLM Staff /Support:

Victoria Barr, FDO
Richard Fields, FFO
Sarah Schlanger, TFO
Jeff Tafoya, FFO
Mark Ames, FFO
Maureen Joe, FFO
Tamara Faust, FFO
Heather Perry, FFO
Sherrie Landon, FFO
Dave Mankiewicz, FFO
Kim Adams, FFO Scribe

Visitors:

Kitty Bensar – Western Slope
no-fee coalition
Sharon Quavis – US Forest Service
Daniel – O&G
Logan Dixon – O&G
Barry Winestock – Taos Park Ranger

May 9 Morning Session (9:00-11:15)

Call to Order, Introductions

RAC Chair Myke Lane called the meeting to order at 9:00 A.M. RAC, BLM staff, and visitors introduced themselves. Victoria Barr went over the expectations the BLM State Director had for the RAC meeting. She said that they wanted to make sure that the BLM continued to be good stewards of the land and that they focus on being good neighbors to other land managers and land users. Myke Lane mentioned that RAC members Theresa Pasqual (arrived late) and Steve Wamel were not present.

Election of Chairperson

Myke Lane asked for nomination for RAC Chairperson. He stated that his term was ending. Norman Norvelle asked if Myke would be willing to serve another year. Myke replied that he would be willing to if no one else was interested in the position.

Discussion: Myke asked if there was interest from anyone else in being chair. None was heard. Myke stated he would take the position if everyone was in favor. Motion presented by Jude Gabaldon and 2nd by Wendy Hageman.

Introductory Remarks

Myke suggested that the group go over the past meeting notes in order to decide if they should be accepted or not. Everyone agreed that minutes needed to be more detailed in the future but that there was no point in attempting to correct the last meeting's minutes and they would have to suffice.

It was brought up that issues with not having enough members attending the meeting does not meet the regulations that require a quorum with all categories represented. Otherwise no decision can be made.

A discussion then ensued about the planning needed to fill open RAC positions. Myke told the group about his experience applying for a RAC position in March and not being contacted back until December. He suggested sending a letter from RAC to the secretary to encourage them to consider expediting the process of filling RAC positions. Martha asked how many vacancies would be opening up this year and Myke replied that four positions would become open in August. Mick asked if RAC could begin to advertise for positions that would open up next year and Myke responded that he would look into it. Tony mentioned that there were only 2 members from Taos and that advertising needed to increase in this area. Victoria stated that these positions were advertised all over and she requested that if anyone knew of any potential future members, they let her know.

The question was presented if a term could be extended in order to meet quorum. Also could it be advertised a year in advance. What will happen with Anthony's position as he will be retiring next year and would no longer meet the requirements for an elected official. Tammy Faust will check with the State and Washington offices to receive the answers to the questions presented.

Taos Field Office Updates – Sarah Schlanger

Sarah introduced herself and the Taos Field Office. She said that the TFO occupied nine counties and managed over 600,000 surface acres. She also explained there are 10 ACECs, 42 miles of National Historic Trail, 104 miles of wild and scenic rivers, one Wilderness Area, two Wilderness Study Areas, one National Monument, and five Scenic Byways were located in the TFO. Forty-five staff members help manage these locations and of these forty-five individuals, twenty-seven were permanent. She stated that their main job was ensuring the conservation of these lands, managing realty actions, aiding in habitat restoration, partnering with other land managers, and encouraging public involvement.

She said that the most recent project Taos was working on was the Rim Rock Rose Ranch donation. This 3,314 acre property was donated by the Wyss family and the property was acquired under Section 6 of the Wilderness Act. Right now the donation was going before congress so they could comment on the land acquisition. She said these comments would most likely be provided late this summer.

Tony stated that he was worried that this land had been donated as a front to stop grazing on these lands.

Sarah responded by saying that under Section 6 of the Wilderness Act owners can put stipulations on land they're donating. But she stated that the Wyss family couldn't stop grazing that was being done on allotments in the area. However, she explained that grazing was no longer actively taking place on these allotments, and because these grazing allotments are in riparian areas, grazing may be removed from these areas to protect the sensitive riparian environment. She stated that the Wyss family was not forcing the BLM to do this, rather, this action was being considered to help protect one of the richest riparian environments in New Mexico.

Norman asked if there were any springs for grazing animals. Sarah replied that there were some springs on the top of the mesa; however, the area hadn't been fully studied seeing as it had been in private hands. Tony said that there would be implications if the BLM decided to restrict grazing in the area. He explained that the Wyss family was part of a leading anti-grazing group, and if the BLM restricted grazing, the people in the area would be very up in arms about it. Sarah responded that Taos had held meetings with grazing permit holders and she said that they had voiced their concerns about visitor safety, and how obtaining this land would affect current permits. Victoria said that about half of the permittees in the area had met with the BLM the previous Saturday. Sarah said that further meetings would be held with the permittees and the BLM would talk about removing dilapidated houses, gates, drinkers, etc. She also said that they would be doing a public review in July and they would respond to any comments they received. She stated that Taos hoped to have a final decision for the matter completed sometime in October.

Sarah then introduced the Taos's Monument Plan they were creating an EA for. She explained that they were currently working their way through a draft of four alternatives. She said that some major concerns with this project were protecting cultural and ecological diversity, and ensuring that traditional uses like pinon nut and firewood gathering continued undisturbed. She stated that she hoped to get the plan for this project out this summer as well.

Norman said that he had heard that managers of the Rio Grande Norte wanted to extend their park. Sarah explained that Colorado had stated their interest in extending the Park to the San Luis Valley, but she said she wasn't sure if this would happen.

Sarah then introduced the plan to purchase the Romero and Maestas Parcels which equaled 5,000 + acres. Tony asked if the BLM was going to pay 1,000 + per acre. He said that local agents needed to appraise the land because others didn't fairly calculate the fair cost. Victoria replied that free market appraisers were used and that it wasn't in their power to choose local appraisers.

The last project Sarah introduced was the 6,605 acre Mesa Prietta land acquisition.

Martha asked if this was whole parcel private land.

Sarah replied that for the most part it was.

Myke said that he had done the math and that if the BLM acquired all of the land that had just been mentioned, in the next 2-3 years 40,000 acres would be withdrawn from property taxes. He asked if this effect would be analyzed in the EA.

Sarah responded that it would be analyzed in the environmental justice section of the EA.

Myke mentioned the fact that once these properties were out of public holdings they couldn't be made into commercial or residential areas. He said that acquiring these properties would add substantially to the BLM's land holdings and he asked if the BLM would get a budget increase to help manage these lands.

Sarah replied that they likely wouldn't receive much of a budget increase and she said that no additional rangers would be hired to police these lands. However, Sarah said that she didn't think that adding these properties would substantially increase Taos workload.

Sarah explained that site steward programs could be used to help protect the lands. Victoria also stated that if these lands were acquired they could manage it as if it were an ACEC which would limit right-of-ways, drilling, etc.

Sarah said Taos was also focusing on two other projects, the NM Gas Company Reroute and the Verde Power Transmission Line. In addition to this, Taos was looking at creating a walking trail from the Santa Fe River to Diablo Canyon. This trail would connect to the larger trail system in the area. And Taos was also looking into developing the Rael Ranch Property as an educational or ecological center.

Martha asked how many acres were included in this property.

Sarah replied that the property consisted of about 17 acres. She explained that this area had heritage apple trees and that this area could be used for organic farming.

And in regards to public events, Sarah stated that about 80 public events or lectures were held each year.

Tony asked how these projects were funded and if they were ran by volunteers.

Sarah replied that some of the funds for these projects came out of the travel budget and that there were some volunteers that assisted with these events.

Sarah asked if anyone had any questions.

Norman enquired about the Manby Hot Springs lands that were mentioned in the last district update.

Sarah responded that these lands had not been acquired.

Tony asked if a lack of funding was the reason this property hadn't been acquired. Sarah said that it hadn't been acquired because they need a deed for it.

Farmington Field Office Update – Rick Fields, Mark Ames, Jeff Tafoya, Victoria Barr.

Rick Fields apologized for not having a beautiful PowerPoint slideshow to go along with his presentation. He said that he had been very busy becoming acquainted with this office, working on the RMPA and that multiple 106 consultation meetings had been held to gather information for the RMP. He said that the Farmington Field Office had been contacted by the Rio de Chama council and that they would like to be a cooperating agency for the RMP.

Mark Ames gave a brief overview of what had been happening with the RMP. He said that the project had languished last year until the beginning of 2016 due to litigation. He said that this year there had been a great push to get this work done and that currently they were working on finalizing the matrix to help create the project alternatives. He said that this matrix would be sent to the State Office and that the State Office would have 3 weeks to review it. He stated that the completed draft should be done in November of 2018.

Theresa asked who reviews this document. Mark replied that the State office would review and approve the document first and then they would release it to cooperating agencies for review. After these parties had reviewed and commented on the document, it would be released to the public.

Victoria stated that RAC would get a copy when it was released to the public. Theresa asked when they expected to receive this document. Mark responded that it depended on the comments they were still receiving from the consultation meetings.

Rick then introduced the Glade Run Management Plan. He said that last year the plan had been approved but it did not get funding. He said that this year Doug was working to create a partnership with the City of Farmington. Rick also said that improvements had recently been done on the Alien Run Parking Area. They are hoping to have some rock crawler events this year.

Recreation is working to improve several sites such as the Bisti and Alien Run bike trails and looking into vault toilets.

Jeff Tafoya said they will have a new range personnel will be coming in soon to help with range projects. He explained the Farmington Field Office's permit renewal process for the checkerboard area. There are 240 permits out of this office with 250 on IBA with 500 being affected over all. They are looking at monitoring contracts and completing the writing of a new EA. Jeff then talked about the work the FFO is doing on the Horse EA, while explain the differences between checkerboard feral horses vs wild horses in the Jicarilla and Caracus areas. The horse advocacy filed a law suit in 2013 against feral horses being picked up by private land owners and turning them over to the livestock board in the area east of Bernalillo "Placitas". He stated that a ruling from the State Supreme Court had been issued that said the horses were wild not feral. Now it has been determined that if a horse has 80% > of Spanish blood then they have to be left on the land, however this is in conflict with the Wild Horse Act of 1979.

Jeff also mentioned the BLM was working with NM Natural Conservation District (Soil, Water and Air) to do work on the Upper San Juan Watershed. He explained that two years ago heavy duty precipitation had deposited a lot of sediment in Simon Canyon and it ruined fly fishing in the canyon for about ¼ mile. Therefore, the BLM was preparing to correct the issues this precipitation had caused.

Tony asked about the drone research that was looking at using drones to dart horses. Jeff replied that he didn't know what happened with this research and that it likely died on the line.

Myke explained that the drone would have had to be massive in order to dart horses, thus there were major problems with this project.

Norman asked if the BLM had stopped giving horses birth control injections.

Jeff responded that they hadn't stopped but that they were looking at the social issues PZP may be causing in horses.

Rick stated that the BLM was taking part in a long term study about the effects of birth control on wild horse populations.

Tony asked how many horses had been counted.

Jeff replied that there were around 374.

Myke asked if there were sanctuaries to house captured horses.

Rick said that many horses had been moved to short term holding facilities and it took about 2 years for them to be moved to long term facilities.

Myke asked what the costs were for housing these horses.

Rick replied that annually the Wild Horse and Burro project cost the US \$70 million.

He stated that there was a program that would allow these animals to be adopted; however, there wasn't much public interest for this.

Victoria said that the US paid \$1,000 per head per year.

Jerry asked how many wild horses were in the Carson Forest.

Jeff replied that the appropriate number of horses on BLM were 23 and 50-105 on Forest Land. This was based on the number of AUMs available for the horses.

Rick then began to talk about the Bracks Cactus issue. He said that the BLM State Office was going to issue a sensitive species IM for the Bracks, however they decided that this wasn't a statewide issue.

There are 2 active rigs drilling in the Mancos Shale. Even the market is slow it should pick back up. BLM is working to stream line processes during this slower time.

Tony brought up a news story he heard that pertained to the methane emissions over the San Juan Basin. He said that he heard that Farmington had the cleanest air in the Southwest. After hearing this report he stated that he wasn't sure how he could reconcile this with the horror stories he had heard about high methane emissions in the area.

Victoria explained that an air quality group meets quarterly to discuss air quality. They still haven't finished looking at methane hot spots but once this data was synthesized it would be released in a report. She stated that the BLM had contributed \$5,000 to the study.

Myke asked if the air quality taskforce was focused on the ozone. He explained that three different sites were monitored for the ozone. Navajo, (one of these three sites) was triggering high levels. Once the data that was being reported from this station was looked at it was discovered that the monitor station was not in compliance. Despite this issue, the data from this station had brought people together to look at the information from the area. He also heard that the individual who had produced the data was using an algorithm to locate the hot spot that was supposedly peer reviewed. However, he stated that there was another way to read this data. Myke explained that recently there had been additional funding to look at aerial and ground based surveillance to examine the flux in and out. He said that lower aircraft had identified spots that were then ground truthed. He stated the equipment in these areas needs to be looked at to see if they are faulty.

Victoria explained that there had been two leaks she knew about where companies were called to go out and fix the issue.

Myke said that there needs to be aerial surveillance done over the mines and the outcrop because they were not previously looked at.

Norman said that if the mines were not looked at then the reports that had been made were worthless.

Myke stated that he had done calculations and the amount of methane coming out of the outcrop was substantial. He stated that he believed that the amount coming from here likely dwarfed the amount being produced by industry.

Victoria said that she had seen a report on Al Jazeera that had said that coal mine vents were producing a large amount of emissions.

Victoria also mentioned that knew that the RAC had been concerned about the BLM's ability to fill positions and she said that the new public affairs and tribal coordinator would be on board late this summer. She said that the BLM was really striving to fill positions and streamline the hiring process.

Victoria stated that on the following day the group would be traveling out to Pierre's Site for a field trip.

Mick asked what the latitude and longitude were for the Pierre's Site. Victoria responded that she would get that information for him.

Jeff said that if RAC members planned on driving their own vehicles out to the site that they should bring a high clearance vehicle.

Victoria said that everyone would meet at the trading post and that if anyone wanted they could jump in a BLM vehicle from there.

May 9 Afternoon Session (12:15-4:30)

Recreation Fees - Barry Winestock

Barry introduced himself and thanked everyone for coming. Myke asked Barry what he did and Barry said that he was in charge of Taos' campground maintenance, trail maintenance, and the interpretive service program. In addition to this, he was currently obtaining his small water system certification.

Barry stated that today he wanted to talk to the RAC about the proposed fee increase at recreation sites in Taos. He said that Taos would be producing a business plan for these fees and they wanted the RAC's opinion to make sure that they charged the appropriate amount.

Myke asked what a facility must have in order to charge a fee.

Barry said that there had to be, a kiosk, trash cans, security, toilets, and it had to be reasonably easy for the manager to collect the fees.

Mick said that there were fees charged in the Glade for the ride, bike, and walk events.

Victoria said that this was different because these fees were issued under a special recreation permit. She said that for these permits the BLM could collect \$5 dollars per person per day. This money was then put into the 1232 account that helped fund the BLM's recreation program. Victoria stated that the FFO doesn't have fee areas but Taos does. She asked Barry if this would be a fee assessment for all BLM sites in Taos.

Barry said that it would be. He said that Rio Chama and Santa Cruz Lake were both under analysis. He said that at Santa Cruz lake, visitors can buy an annual pass that costs \$20 for 365 days whereas other recreation sites charge \$12 per day. Therefore, Taos has come to the realization that their fees were underpriced and that it was time to reevaluate them.

Barry said that he was just there to let everyone know about the business plan that would be presented in the fall. He said that he wanted to gather recommendations for what the RAC would like to see in the business plan.

Barry explained that Taos had seen an increase in rec site usage, however the amount congress is designating to take care of these sites was decreasing. So in order to continue taking good care of these sites, the TFO felt that a fee increase would be a good idea.

Barry stated that there are some facilities in Taos that need to be upgraded. For instance, he said that the Poatka campground needed a reroute to help with speed control.

But before a fee increase could take place Taos had to conduct an analysis and create a proposal to submit to Washington, and the District Manager. After submitting this they had to wait for approval before they could change anything.

If the proposal was approved Taos could then take their proposal to the RAC and they could accept, request changes, or reject the proposal. After this is done, then Taos can review it.

Victoria said that she thought that fees were very important and she mentioned the time last year when the assistant secretary came and the rec sites had not been maintained at all. She said that this was very embarrassing and that she was proud that Taos was doing a great job with the up-keep on their rec areas.

Wendy asked if Taos had analyzed the visitor use and trends at certain sites. Barry responded that they had kept track of the number of people visiting each site by analyzing vehicle numbers, self-reporting by visitors and fees. He said that at Rio Chama they tracked visitor numbers by the number of permit sales. He stated that he believed that Taos was seeing an increase in the number of visitors in the lower Gorge area because they were collecting more money in these areas.

Wendy asked if maintenance had increased in these areas.

Barry replied that it had.

Martha asked when the campgrounds opened and closed for winter.

Barry explained that they don't. He said that the water was sometimes shut off when not enough people were visiting a given site and the water lines were under threat of freezing. But he said that even then the camp grounds remained open.

Myke said that it might make sense to do surveys to further analyze these sites and how fee increases would affect its visitors.

Barry replied that in 2009 a survey had been done to look at visitor satisfaction, the amount of money guests spent on their trip, etc. He said that this may be a good source of information for this study.

Myke said that he believed that the level of usage and level of maintenance at certain sites needed to be examined. He said that doing this could help answer many questions.

Wendy said that Barry had said that the fees being charged were low and she asked what Taos had been compared to in order to determine that their prices were low.

Barry responded by saying that the fair market value method had been used to determine if it was low. And he said that prices here were much lower than in other states.

Myke asked if the fair market value took into account living expenses in the area.

Sarah responded that at Rio Chama fees were paid largely by people from Colorado, therefore, if a living expense analysis was done then they would also have to look at where visitors were coming from.

Barry said that a cost recovery method was being looked at. He said that currently fees only covered 42% of operating costs.

Jude asked how much would need to be charged in order to go from red to green.

Barry replied that a 35% increase would be in line with the cost of living and this would generate \$60,000 additional recreation dollars.

Barry then asked if there were any other questions and when no one responded he thanked everyone for their time.

Sharon Quavis – Forest Service Recreation

Sharon Quavis introduced herself and said that she was looking at how to make sustainable recreation for the public a reality even though Forest Service Staffing was decreasing. She stated that she recognized that improvement wasn't a high priority right now but that there were sites

that needed some work. She explained that the Forest Service used a fee program to keep up with maintenance on their sites. She said that right now 99% of the forest is free to visit. Only sites with amenities charge fees. What she wanted to do was ask the public what they wanted from their recreation sites (more or less amenities, what sites they liked to use, what other services they would like to see). Sharon said that a market analysis would be done before fee proposals came out and she would let the RAC know what the Forest Service planned on doing with increased fee charges before they initiated them. She also said that she would share how the Forest Service reached out to visitors and what feedback they got from them. The reason why the fee increase was needed would also be shared with the RAC team.

Sharon informed the group that, because budgets were shared, the rising cost of fire maintenance had really eaten into recreations budget. She stated that in 1995 fire used 16% of the budget, whereas in 2016 they used 52%. And in 2025 it was projected that fire would use 67% of the budget.

Dave Mankiewicz suggested just letting fires burn out. Sharon said that in areas with no structures this is sometimes done. Myke said that this is a challenge because there is a lot more urban interface than in the past.

Tony asked if the Forest Service had figured out their NEPA process. Myke explained that the Forest Service's NEPA process was different from the BLM's because the Forest Service was more cautious because of all of the lawsuits they had been subjected to. He said that the Forest Service's NEPA had just evolved to try to mitigate effects in the most thorough way possible. Sharon stated that it was difficult because there are many people that don't want one tree to be disturbed.

Sharon thanked the group for their time and Myke called for a ten minute break.

Kitty Bensar – Western Slope No-Fee Coalition

Kitty introduced FLREA (Federal Lands Recreation Enhancements Act of 2004) which laid out guidelines for where fees could be charged on public land. She said that there are four areas where fees can be charged. These are as follows:

Entrance fees

Standard amenities

Expanded amenities

And Special Recreation Permits

She said that one great complaint that is often heard about federal land fees is that there is little to no public input about enacting these fees. Kitty said that FLREA recognizes the importance of

Recreation RACs because they are able to review, evaluate and make sure the fee increase had the general support of the public.

Kitty explained that FLREA was the program that established affordable senior passes for those over age 62.

Kitty requested that Myke make sure that all of the RAC members were given a copy of FLREA, and that before any action was decided upon, that members familiarize themselves with FLREA.

Myke said that he would make sure that each member had a copy.

Kitty stated that FLREA expired in September 2017 and that it would likely be revised.

Oil and Gas Overview and Onshores 3, 4, 5, & 9 – Dave Mankiewicz

Dave said that the numbers of APDs being approved has dropped substantially in recent years. He said that 940 were approved in 2006 but in 2008 the numbers began to drop. By 2013 only 102 APDs were approved.

Dave also said that there was a 40% decline in production.

He explained that the BLM hires inspectors (petroleum engineering technicians – PETs) to make sure that production is safe. Currently there are 23 federal inspectors in the area, the largest number in the BLM.

He stated that the San Juan Basin was located on the Colorado Plateau, which is a very stable geologic feature. Therefore, fracking in the area is most likely not going to cause earthquakes like it has in other areas like Oklahoma. He pointed out that the last earthquake in the Four Corners area occurred in 1973.

Dave brought up the nitrogen foam that is used for fracking and he said that 80-95% of the water used in this was recycled.

Myke stated that he did the math once and while oil and gas used 3.13 billion gallons a year, the average golf course used 133,000 gallons of water a day. And New Mexico alone had 100 golf courses.

Cheat Grass – Heather Perry

Said that the BLM managed many acres of land that had noxious weeds, and because of this, they had decided to look at integrated weed management. She said that the Farmington Field Office was doing a trial usage of Pseudomonas F? which is used to control cheatgrass. She explained how cheatgrass in Utah contributed to the huge fire in Utah, and since this event, ways to get rid of cheatgrass have been investigated. Heather stated that Pseudomonas F targets the germination of these plants and must be applied when the temperature is above 50 degrees.

Myke asked if the spray targeted other species. Heather replied that it didn't seem to impact them. She said that 7 states and 16 field offices have joined in this study. She explained that this product is a powder that is mixed with water and applied directly to the soil. She said that the mixture was applied on cheatgrass on the Rosa and Manzanares Mesas and would be monitored for results.

Myke asked if it was applied last winter and if the results from this project would be available next fall. Heather said that it was applied last winter she hopes that data will be available by next fall.

Tony asked if this would be done anywhere in Taos. Heather responded that she didn't think so because *Pseudomonas F* had to be applied in very low temperatures, high elevation and a moisture rich environment.

The Pentaceratops Ops – Sherri Landon

Sherri introduced the BLM's involvement of the 2015 pentaceratops recovery in the Bisti-Badlands. She said that during this project two adult and one baby pentaceratops were recovered from the Bisti wilderness and Au-Shi-Sle-Pah wilderness study area. The baby was a unique find because one had never been recovered before. She said that these bones had been discovered in 2011 by Amanda Cantrell, NM Museum of Natural History and Science (NMMNHS) and that the airlifts took place in October and November 2015.

Victoria said that regulations prohibited the usage of machines in the wilderness area; therefore no vehicles could be taken out to the site. Instead, all equipment had to be carried in by hand to the site and in order to leave as small a footprint as possible, the National Guard agreed fly in Blackhawk helicopters directly to the project without setting down in order to collect these specimens (the largest pentaceratops skull weighed 6,500 lbs).

Sherri went over the complex NEPA process that was followed in preparation for and during this project. She said that this document was very thorough and that the EA covered each aspect of the project. Everyone....., the museum staff and the National Guard in addition to BLM staff, had to follow the process laid out in the EA.

Sherri stated that even the usage of the designated parking lot was analyzed and mitigated wherever possible.

Jude asked who gave the permission to excavate the fossils, and he also asked who was responsible for curating these objects. Sherri replied that the BLM had issued the permit to excavate and that, while the BLM still owned the artifacts, their curation, research and display was being handled by the museum.

Victoria reminded the group that while the public can collect invertebrate fossils, all vertebrate fossils (including coprolites) could not be collected without a permit. She also said that in wilderness areas no fossil collection is permitted.

Mick asked if the fossils were on display.

Victoria replied that they were on display but they were still like mud stone, and the fossil reconstruction probably wouldn't take place for another year and a half.

Sherri said that the process of removing the fossil from the mud and plaster was very interesting and that the museum staff was putting up different posters for each stage of the project.

Sherri explained that the Bisti is a very unique area and that dinosaurs and the climate here were different from other areas. She said that these fossils are about 68-70 million years old and that they provide a unique glimpse into what was happening in the area during this time period.

Sherri stated that museums from all over the world ask for fossil loans to display at their facilities.

Victoria said that there was also an effort to try to obtain 3D prints of these fossils. She also explained that a T-Rex skull that had been loaned out to the Smithsonian is going to be requested back that way it can be put on display in a facility closer to where it was discovered.

She said she would like to see a fossil museum created somewhere near the Bisti that way people in this area could see some of the amazing fossils that had been recovered from the area.

Myke asked if there were any other fossil finds the BLM was currently working on. Victoria replied that the University of Denver had conducted a surface survey and during this survey they had discovered a Hadrosaur that they now wanted to excavate. She said that before the BLM gave permission for them to excavate they are going to conduct consultation with various tribes in the area.

Mick asked how far from the road the fossils were located. Sherri replied that one of the fossils was 3 miles from the road, therefore equipment had to be carried in on foot for 3 miles.

Theresa said that she hoped that these finds could be used to help interest children in pursuing careers in non-renewable resources such as paleontology.

RAC members asked if they could receive copies of the PowerPoints presented. Tamara will email them. Wendy made a motion for the meeting to be adjourned and it was accepted. For those attending the field trip in the morning they will meet in the parking lot at 8am. Be sure to have sturdy hiking shoes, sunscreen, bug spray, hat, long sleeves and bring liquids. Water will be provided by the BLM. Keep an eye out for rattle snakes as they are present.

May 10 - Pierre's Archeological Site Field Tour

A field site visit was conducted to the Pierre's archeological site on May 10, 2016. This is an unexcavated site within the Chaco Culture property of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural organization (UNESCO) World Heritage List, existing in an area of substantial and moderate anticipated oil and gas development. The site provided an excellent example of multiple resources working together. Brian Deaton, BLM archeologist provided historic information about the site. Theresa Pasqual also contributed an informative historical view from a cultural and family view point that had been passed down for many generations. Victoria Barr, District Manager and Richard Fields, Field Manager addressed the "multiple use" issues facing the Farmington District office. This included protecting resources while allowing for recreation use, meeting the mandate of oil and gas leasing, and other uses. Attending the field trip were, RAC members: Norman Norvelle, Anthony Benson, Martha Brown, Wendy Hageman, and Theresa Pasqual, BLM representatives: Victoria Barr, Richard Fields, Brian Deaton, Joe Hewitt, Kim Adams, Janet Clawson, Mark Ames and Tamara Faust.