



Twin Falls District Resource Advisory Council



MEETING MINUTES
9/14/2016

Resource Advisory Council (RAC) members present:

Category One – Commodity Interest

- Richard Austin
- Mike Henslee
- Greg Moore
- Brett Meyer
- James Wills

Category Two – Non-Commodity Interest

- Shauna Robinson
- Peggy Stanley
- LaMar Orton

Category Three – Public Interest

- Jody Hawkins
- Tom Courtney
- Charles Howell
- Michelle Richman
- Preston Buckskin for Hunter Osborne

Quorum Present: Yes No

Bureau of Land Management (BLM) representatives present:

Michael Courtney –District Manager
Elizabeth Maclean –Associate District Manager
Heather Tiel-Nelson- Public Affairs Specialist
Ken Crane, Burley Field Manager
Elliot Traher, Jarbidge Field Manager
Cody Martin, Shoshone Field Manager
John Kurtz, Shoshone Outdoor Recreation Planner
Lisa Claxton – Jarbidge Realty Specialist
Erin Curtis – Idaho State Office Supervisory Public Affairs Specialist
Tommy Hayes – Twin Falls District Fire Management Officer
Sue Kennedy, Burley Administrative Assistant

Public Attendees:

W.K. Buck Moore

Note to readers: A copy of each handout listed in the text of, or at the end of these minutes, is on file with the official copy of the minutes in the BLM Burley Field Office. Persons desiring to view handouts should contact Sue Kennedy at (208) 677-6627, or by email at slkennedy@blm.gov.

Copies of certified minutes are posted on the Idaho BLM website at:

[RAC Minutes](#)

Item I: Welcome and Introductions

Michael Courtney opened with a welcome and introductions.

Item II: Wood River Valley Travel Management Planning – John Kurtz

A presentation about BLM travel management planning was given. It reviewed the planning process including route inventory, evaluation and NEPA analysis. There was a discussion about BLM's definition of on Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) and how travel management addressed non-OHV travel such as hiking, mountain biking and equestrian uses. It also reviewed the definitions of permitted and authorized uses.

Item III: Twin Falls District Fire Update – Tommy Hayes

Much of last year's precipitation levels were at or above normal, but fuels quickly dried out during June, July and August, becoming critical across much of the District. Energy Release Components (ERCs) in many areas were above the 90% and even into the 97% range and some areas reached new record highs for ERCs encompassing the last 10 years.

September is typically a month of change in fire conditions: shorter days lessen the available solar radiations to dry and heat fuels; longer nights are cooler with higher humidity. These conditions help reduce fire activity and normally end fire season.

The heli-tack crew has been on the Pioneer Fire since July 17th spending the entire summer off-district with the exception of about six days. Helicopter 5BD has 297 flight hours and the contract doesn't end until September 30th.

The fuels program successfully treated 3,300 acres during the East Cinder prescribed fire. This year's accomplishments include: Jarbidge vegetation treatments; 21,366 acres: Burley vegetation treatment; 24,866 acres and Shoshone vegetation treatments; 28,896 acres.

Fire Operations has taken every opportunity to get assets and trainees off district to gather experience while ensuring the District has coverage.

Federal assisted fires include: Saylor Creek and Three Creek Rangeland Fire Protection Associations (RFPAs) for the Magic Waters fire 6/30/16; Shoshone Basin RFPA was on the Nat Soo Pah fire 7/22/16; and Notch Butte RFPA was on the Notch Butte 2 Fire 7/29/16.

Item IV: 40 Years of Federal Land Policy Management Act (FLPMA) – Michael Courtney

Mike talked about the history of FLPMA, why an organic act was necessary and what FLPMA does for us.

The FLPMA defines our mission as multiple use and sustained yield. Public lands that are developed in the right places can drive economic opportunities for local communities, while protecting natural and non-renewable resources at the same time. The BLM also manages minerals for Tribes on reservations as well as some areas of private surface ownership.

Some of the major provisions of FLPMA include law enforcement which authorized BLM to hire uniformed rangers in the California Desert. Today, the Twin Falls District also relies on cooperative agreements with 13 Counties. Another provision is Finance and Budget which established BLM's working capital fund, which allows us to purchase supplies and equipment to support BLM programs. Section 202 directs BLM to identify Areas of Critical Environmental Concern through its planning process. FLPMA also authorized grazing fees and directed BLM to assure long term use and sustainability of public lands by the livestock industry. Grazing Advisory Boards were established to advise BLM on Allotment Management Plans and expenditures of range betterment funds.

The BLM manages over 245 million acres of land and resources. It makes solar, wind and geothermal energy possible and is home to more than 3,000 species of mammals, reptiles, amphibians and birds. Public lands also provide the opportunities for Tribes to practice treaty rights; more than 99% of BLM-managed lands are available for recreational use with no fees and more than 62 million people across the country recreated on BLM-managed lands.

Item V: Update on Implementation Guidance for Greater Sage-Grouse Plans – Ammon Wilhelm

The sage-grouse implementation IMs were released September 1, 2016 and are available at [Sage grouse IM](#) in the documents and resource section. Ammon gave a brief overview of the three IMs along with the current status of the mineral withdrawal. A meeting was held on September 1 that addressed the reasonable foreseeable development scenario as it pertains to Idaho, Nevada and Oregon.

Travel planning will use the approved Sage-grouse plan amendment Record of Decision (ROD) which limited motorized vehicle travel to existing routes. In 2016, money was allocated for completing route inventory, route evaluation and implementation in Sage-grouse focal areas.

Fire and Invasive Assessment Team (FIAT) was initiated a few years ago to assess three major threats to sage-grouse habitat and quantify the BLM planned actions to conserve the habitat. The FIAT reports are guiding the BLM's implementation vegetation treatments as part of the Sage-grouse Plan amendment.

Other Business:

Next meeting will be February 22, 2017 at the new Twin Falls District Office at 0830.

Handouts Provided:

- 1- Twin Falls District Fire Update (1p)**

- 2- BLM Issues Guidance for Implementing Greater Sage-Grouse Plans News Release (1p)**
- 3- USFW 2020 Greater Sage-grouse Status Review (3pp)**

Minutes certified by:

//Signed//Mike Henslee, TFD RAC Chairman

March 15, 2017

//Signed//Michael Courtney, TFD Manager

March 15, 2017

Minutes recorded by:

Sue Kennedy, Burley Field Office Administrative Assistant