

**BLM Colorado Statewide Resource Advisory Council**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
**May 12, 2021**  
**Virtual Meeting**

**Resource Advisory Council Members:**

*Northwest RAC:* Carl Conner, Shawn Brennan, Shannon Chollett, Roy Karo, Anthony Vagneur, Callie Hendrickson, Tom Jankovsky, Merrit Linke, Mike Pritchard

*Rocky Mountain RAC:* David Bieber, Arthur Koepsell, Grady Ham, Frederick Henderson III, Cody Dyce, Stan Whinnery, Kent Wood, Ray Douglas

*Southwest RAC:* John Reams, Lori Buck, Renzo DelPiccolo, Katie Steele, John Justman, Jonathan Roeber, Mark Austin, Latifia Rodriguez, James Haugsness, Roger Cesario, Kathy Welt, Paul Garchar, Christi Zeller

**BLM Attendees:**

Brittany Sprout, Shawn Reinhardt, Kirby Shedlowski, Chris Maestas, Joseph Islas, Jayson Barangan, Kate Miyamoto, Elijah Waters, Stephanie Connolly, Steven Hall, Brant Porter, Connie Clementson, Brady Owens, Suzanne Copping, Eric Coulter, Suzanne Copping, Ray O'Neil, Keith Berger, William Mills, Stacey Colon, Larry Sandoval, Alan Bittner, Greg Larson, Erin Jones, Melissa Garcia, Cathy Cook, Kent Walter, Greg Wolfgang, Elizabeth Dawson, Jamie Connell, Collin Ewing, Bruce Sillitoe, Ben Gruber, Brian Amstutz, Edd Franz, Chris Krassin, Roxanne Baca, Sarah Sims.

**Guests:**

Michael Ritter, Robbie LeValley, Jake Niece, Alyssa Logan, John Whitney, Sarah McCarthy, Janeth Stanle, Sue Hansen, J Timothy Redmond, Cathy Garcia, Clarice Navarro, Rachel Sralla, Adam Ortega, Tif Rodriguez, Kathy Chandler-Henry, Starr Jamison, Soren Jespersen.

**Opening and introductions:**

The meeting opened by facilitator and Lead Public Affairs Specialist, Jayson Barangan. Jayson welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced BLM employees and Resource Advisory Council members from the Rocky Mountain, Southwest and Northwest RAC. BLM Colorado State Director Jamie Connell greeted attendees and thanked members for their dedication and service on the RAC. First statewide RAC meeting since 2017.

**Fall 2020 District Boundaries Realignment**

- Jayson Barangan presented on the new district boundaries and shared updated maps. BLM Colorado now has four districts, Northwest, Southwest, Rocky Mountain and Upper Colorado River Districts. The Upper Colorado River District was added in 2020.

**RAC Overview**

- Jayson Barangan presented a RAC overview, covering the Federal Advisory Committee Act of 1972 – FACA committees provide advice that is relevant, objective, and open to the public

- Provided a brief history on Resource Advisory Councils – roots in the 1934 Taylor Grazing Act, BLM established RACs as part of its 1995 grazing regulations, expanded roles since
- Reviewed RAC roles – provide counsel and advice to Secretary of Interior, BLM has three RACs, do not provide advice on budget or personnel actions
- Reviewed the three categories under RAC memberships, 15 members serve three-year terms
- Discussed meetings, notices, typical schedules, field trips
- Went over recommendations flow chart and process, recapped the rules and regulations/laws

Question: If there is an issue the RAC wants more information on, is there a mechanism that the RAC can consult outside parties that isn't in an official meeting? Can we consult subject matter experts without it being part of the meeting? There are subcommittees for official. You can and it is encouraged for RAC members to talk and network and learn about your community. As an individual you are free to talk to anyone to learn more. If you bring a resolution to the table, you must allow public comment.

### **Recreation Enhancement Act – RAC Roles and Responsibilities**

- Tim Finger, BLM Recreation Specialist, presented on the Recreation Enhancement Act. The Recreation Enhancement Act was first enacted in 2004, 10-year authority (extended), directed the Secretary of Interior to create RACs, RACS are directed to publicly review fee proposals or have Recreation Resource Advisory Committee (RRAC) do it for them.
- RRAC purpose is to provide fee recommendations to BLM, under FACA, Citizens Advisory Committee subgroup, has 11 members from legislated groups
- Discuss roles and responsibilities of RRAC – schedule meetings, approve motion for recommendation, hear public comments, etc. RRAC does not make recommendations on concession sites, issue commercial permits, or issue special recreation permits and events.
- Discussed RRAC fee review process – developed, public input, State Director review, HQ review, RRAC review and recommend, BLM implement, modifies or withdraws proposal.
- RRAC will review new fee or fee change proposal, summary of public involvement, fee revenue expenditure, non-fee revenue expenditure, a business plan. Fees must not be used for general access/entrance, dispersed areas, overlooks or scenic pullouts, travel over roads commonly used between two places, employee bonuses, biological monitoring, non-recreational activity.

Questions: Reviewed campground fee proposal in NW RAC, spent time on future price increases, price index, is there a mechanism to avoid continual fee voting? Did this for Canyons of the Ancients National Monument, looked at reasonable increases based on inflation, can write it into the business plan and resolution.

### **One-hour Lunch Break**

#### **Ethics Training**

- Roxanna Baca, Ethics Attorney Adviser for BLM, presented on ethics. RAC members are representative members – a voice for a group or other entity that may have a financial interest or other state in a matter before the advisory committee. Federal ethics laws do not apply to RAC members because they are not government employees, but we provide ethics guidance.

- Required to provide guidance to RAC members on conflicts of interest, responsibilities in the Charter, etc. RAC members can't participate where the member or the entity the member represents has a direct financial interest.
- RAC members must recuse themselves for any direct financial interest, i.e., member's specific grazing permit, oil and gas lease, etc.

Discussion on how and when to recuse as RAC members, members have responsibility to know when to recuse, review agendas prior to meeting and have discussions, let DFO and others know you have a conflict of interest and need to recuse.

## Open Discussion

Question: Christi Zeller asked how should RAC members approach media requests? BLM Public Affairs Specialists are present at meetings to help with media requests. RAC members are not BLM employees can speak to the media. Let BLM know if you (RAC members) are approached by media, since it is a BLM function. Be clear who speaking for, not for BLM.

Question: Mr. Roy Karo asked with the current drought in Colorado, can grazing permittees expect a reduction in this summer's grazing? Conditions of grazing lands are different based on what part of the state, discuss with District Managers and Field Managers.

Question: Mr. David Bieber asked lots of member terms expire in 2022 and want to continue, when will we reapply for current RAC members? The BLM will do another call for nominations for those that expire in 2022 with *Federal Register* notice, press release, social media.

Question: Mike Pritchard asked when the RAC will be able to gather in person and have field trips? Easier to have a field trip because outdoors. Gathering in a group in a conference room is more difficult due to mask and meeting size requirements. This is something to discuss in individual RACs with Designated Federal Officials and plan for in the future.

Discussion on statewide RAC contact information, sharing with other RACs.

Question: How do RACs decide on meeting topics and how can members contribute to the agenda? At end of meetings, RAC members have a say in what the next meeting agenda will be. For statewide RAC- best way to figure out topics for statewide meeting is communicate with state public affairs specialist, reach out six months prior to the statewide RAC meeting.

## State Director Closing Remarks – Jamie Connell, BLM Colorado State Director

- Thanks to presenters and those who set up the meeting.
- Thanks to the RAC members, very important voice, very valuable.

## Meeting Adjourns




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Mike Pritchard, Chair  
Northwest District Resource Advisory Council