

**BLM Idaho Falls District – Resource Advisory Council  
September 22-23, 2015**

*Challis Field Office  
1151 Blue Mountain Road  
Challis, Idaho 83226*

**Meeting Minutes  
Day 1  
September 22, 2015**

**Opening**

The meeting of the BLM Idaho Falls District Resource Advisory Council (RAC) was called to order at 10:00 a.m. in the BLM Challis Field Office conference room by RAC chairman Matt Woodard.

**Present**

Jon Goode, Jerald Raymond, Coby Tigert, Blaine Newman, Matt Woodard, Stephen Bauchman, Louise Stark, Kevin Poor, Babette Thorpe, Garth Blanchard, Dave Pacioretty, Jeremy Casterson, Todd Kuck, Karen Rice, Mary D'Aversa, Dana Olsen, Marianne Little, Ken Wixom, Beth Waterbury, Gloria Jakovac, Jesse Bender, Joni Cain, Vincent Guyer, Antonia Hedrick, Carol Hearne, Mike Whitson, Eric Reiland,

**Welcome to the Challis Field Office - Introductions**

*Todd Kuck, Challis Field Office Manager*

An overview of fall RAC meeting agenda and introduction of the new Idaho Falls District Manager, Mary D'Aversa were provided. Mary provided an overview of her history with the BLM and her vision for the Idaho Falls District.

Introduction of staff and guests and general housekeeping discussion. It was noted that the Sage Grouse Records of Decision had been signed and that a finding of 'not warranted for listing' had been reached.

**Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

**Recreation RAC Overview - Informational**

*Joanna Wilson, Region 4 Forest Service*

The Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA) requires that the FS and BLM provide Recreation RACs with an opportunity to make recommendations to the agencies on certain

recreation fee proposals for standard amenities, extended amenities and special recreation permits. In the BLM Idaho Falls District, the BLM RAC is tasked with reviewing and approving such fee proposals including Christmas tree fee proposals and rental cabin fee proposals.

The duties of the RAC include: establishing or eliminating recreation fees, modifying existing fees and expanding or limiting fee programs.

### **Recreation RAC - Action**

#### ***Salmon-Challis NF, Copper Basin Guard Station,***

Trish Callaghan – Recreation Manager, Salmon-Challis USFS

USFS is requesting a fee setting for the facility based on recent updates. The facility will be available from June 1 through September 30 with a requested fee rate of \$100 per night.

The public notification process has been completed including news releases, public posting and briefings to elected officials in Butte and Custer County. Public comment has been positive.

The RAC discussion included a need for rental scheduling, recommendations for setting a minimum number of nights stay, providing an extended stay incentive (6<sup>th</sup> night free with a 5 night rental) and other possible options to maximize public use and agency income while reducing overhead. 95% of these fees are committed to the facility or district and 5% are placed in a regional fund.

After discussion, action was taken.

**Motion to approve the requested fee of \$100/night - Dana Olsen**

**Second to the motion – John Goode**

**Motion carried - Unanimous**

#### ***Caribou-Targhee NF Christmas Tree Proposal***

Joanna Wilson – USFS

The Caribou-Targhee NF is requesting a Christmas tree permit fee increase from \$10 to \$15 per tree (maximum 20 ft.).

These permits are authorized through REA as “Special Recreation Permits”. CTNF sells approximately 7,200 tags each year. The funds collected are used to provide for extended offices hours, additional law enforcement and agreements with counties to provide for additional plowed roads for tree harvesting. This is a very popular program that provides for traditional family activity on public lands.

The public notification process has been completed including news releases, public posting and briefings to elected officials. Public comment has been positive.

The RAC discussion included consideration of competitive rates with adjacent forests and other potential price points.

After discussion, action was taken.

**Motion to approve the requested fee to \$15 – Marianne Little**  
**Second to the motion – Babette Thorpe**  
**Motion carried - Unanimous**

### **SRP and WSA Overview and Discussion - Informational**

Robin Fehlau, Idaho State Office Recreation

Information regarding activities that require a special recreation permit (SRP) was provided to the RAC. The permits are issued as a means to control visitor use, protect recreational and natural resources and provide for public safety. There are also other permits available including Organized Groups and Commercial SRPs to accommodate other needs and to ensure fair return to the US for commercial recreational use on public lands.

A Wilderness Study Areas (WSA) is a roadless area that has been inventoried and found to have wilderness characteristic as described in FLPMA. The characteristics include naturalness, outstanding opportunity, size, and values.

The recent Boulder White Clouds (BWC) Wilderness legislation has resulted in the release of some areas from WSA designation. Todd explained that the development of land management plans for these areas will require NEPA. Those plans will be developed as the BLM and FS develop plans for the BWC.

### **Riparian Work Overview - Informational**

BLM Challis

The Challis Field Office is engaged in a number of riparian restoration projects in collaboration with the Upper Salmon River Basin Watershed Project. Riparian projects are improving stream conditions, reconnecting dewatered sections of streams and improving habitat and water quality. Projects include:

- Mill Creek in the Pahsimeroi
- P-16 in the Pahsimeroi
- Little Boulder Campground in the East Fork of the Salmon River

There are a number of additional projects planned for the next few years that will improve functionality of riparian areas within the Upper Salmon watershed. These plans include a number of partnering agencies, landowners and non-government organizations.

**Boulder White-Cloud Overview – Informational**

Todd Kuck = Challis Field Office Manager, BLM

The Boulder White Clouds designated approximately 24,500 acres of WSAs as wilderness and released the remaining 83,500 acres of WSAs to other management. The BLM and FS will work together to develop a management plan for the newly designated Wilderness areas.

Restrictions on the use of the released WSAs will remain in effect until an appropriate NEPA process is taken to change the management direction. Land management planning for the Wilderness areas is to occur within 3 years.

**Bat Cost-Share Program - Information**

Beth Waterbury, IDF&G & Bart Zwetzig, Challis BLM

Eleven bat species are listed on the BLM's Sensitive Species list. The BLM and IDFG have been collaborating to survey for bat presence in the BLM Salmon and Challis Field Offices. The BLM will benefit from the data gathered with the ability to meet existing policy when making management decisions. Findings to date include:

- Bats present at all survey sites
- Several sites show high activity
- Bat activity is lower sage steppe areas
- Spotted bats and other sensitive species are present in the survey area

**Approve Meeting Minutes - Action Item**

The minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed and action was taken.

**Motion to approve the minutes – Marianne Little**

**Second to the motion – Jerald Raymond**

**Motion carried - Unanimous**

**Meeting adjourned**

With no other business, Matt adjourned the meeting at 5:00 after reviewing meeting time for the field trip on day two.

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**Meeting Minutes**  
**Day 2**  
**September 23, 2015**

***Tour of the Boulder White Clouds - Informational***

A tour of the East Fork of the Salmon River and access points to some of the Wilderness area was provided. Discussion included wilderness management, WSA release cooperative partnerships, travel planning, livestock grazing management and coordination with FS.

The tour concluded at the Little Boulder Campground with an explanation of the needs for streambank stabilization and an opportunity to view the project in process.

***Schedule winter meeting - Action Item***

Discussion was held regarding the winter meeting. A consensus was reached that the meeting will be held in Idaho Falls with a tentative date of January 26 and 27. Recommendations for the next meeting agenda are to be sent to Sarah Wheeler.

***New Business***

There was no new business.

***Meeting adjourned***

Meeting was adjourned at 2:15 by Matt Woodard, BLM Idaho Falls District RAC Chairman.

Minutes submitted by: Coby Tigert, BLM Idaho Falls District RAC Secretary

Approved by: