

Bureau of Land Management
Alaska Resource Advisory Council Meeting
Office of Aircraft Services
Anchorage, Alaska
October 29-30, 2013

Day 1: Tuesday, October 29, 2013

Council members present: Michael Wald, David Brown, Sharon McClintock, Gary Morrison, Michael McDougall, Roy Ashenfelter, Peter Fix, Suzanne Little, Samantha Carroll, Chris Degernes, Darcie Warden, and Stan Foo.

BLM Representatives Present: Bud Cribley, Erin Curtis, Tim Hammond, Steve Hartmann, Lenore Heppler, Steve Cohn, Karen Kelleher, Jena Daly, Thom Jennings, Jolie Pollet, Ron Dunton, Callie Webber, Teresa McPherson, Brenda TakesHorse, Matt Varner, and John Hoppe.

Members of the public present: Barrett Ristroph, Lois Epstein and Tim Woody of the Wilderness Society.

Call to Order: 9:00 a.m.

Chairman **Mike McDougall** called the meeting to order. RAC members and BLM-Alaska staff introduced themselves.

McDougall asked for comments on the agenda and there were none. The agenda and minutes from the last RAC meeting were approved without change. The group reviewed the minutes from the last RAC meeting. RAC member **Samantha Carroll** made the motion to approve them and RAC member **Suzanne Little** seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Bud Cribley, BLM-Alaska State Director, gave a recap of what has been accomplished since the last RAC meeting held April 2012 in Anchorage. Updates included: 2 land use plans, placer mining policy, legacy wells, conveyance program, updates from significant programs, oil development in the NPR-A and IAP integration, fire suppression costs, and budget issues.

Bud Cribley presented a BLM-Alaska Overview presentation to the group outlining the activities above.

RAC member **Sharon McClintock**:

- News articles on accelerated transfer of Native Lands are incorrect. Conveyances of land to ANCSA corporations are near completion; but they do not distinguish between interim conveyed (IC) acreage and surveyed lands that are patented. IC lands need survey and are not the same as a patent.

RAC member **Little** asked for an example of when the RAC assisted BLM-Alaska.

State Director, **Bud Cribley**:

- The RAC assisted BLM-Alaska with the development of the current Trapper Cabin Policy to include authorization, fees and assessment. The policy was vetted through the RAC and went through public testimony with recommendations for management. The current work on the placer mining policies will also be vetted through the RAC.

RAC member **McClintock**:

- Last year the RAC passed a resolution supporting BLM budget for survey and boundary issues. ANCSA conveyances have noticed a reduction in surveys. The Alaska Native Village CEO Association sent a letter to the Secretary regarding this. <Clarification: In April 2012, the BLM-Alaska RAC passed resolution 12-02 recommending “BLM continue to comply with ANCSA and the Alaska Statehood Act and expeditiously complete the Cadastral Survey to all Native and State lands so that it can grant final patent as intended by Congress.” It is beyond the scope of the RAC to make recommendations regarding budget or personnel matters.>

Steve Hartmann, Fairbanks District Reports:

Hartmann provided the RAC a handout of 20 Fairbanks District Office projects currently on-going. He also mentioned the NPRA-IAP and NPR-A Working Group implementation.

RAC member **Carroll**, asked if the State will be invited to participate. They will be invited to participate as an ex-officio member.

RAC member **Carroll**, asked about the status of the EA and for a copy of it. Tim Hammond will follow-up on the request.

RAC member **Suzanne Little**, asked if the REAs were used to inform larger planning processes and if there is a public role in the process. **Hartmann** answered that the REAs are all science based and there is no public input.

RAC member **Gary Morrison**, asked if the BLM is doing anything to reconcile the 40-Mile situation in Chicken. **Hartmann** said the situation has been addressed respectfully.

RAC member, **Carroll**, asked if there were any mining violations found when BLM visited Chicken. **Hartmann** said of the 30 mines visited, 1/3 had water quality issues and issues with turbidity levels.

RAC member, **McDougall** asked for an update on the Trapper Cabin Policy. **Tim Hammond** said they have received one application for reauthorization.

RAC member, **Carroll** cited increased mining activity in the Nome Creek area.

Anchorage District Office Reports:

Karen Kelleher, Anchorage District Office Manager, presented a PowerPoint presentation and gave the group a handout of the districts' activities, highlighting the following:

- 4 LCCs
 - Western Alaska and Northwest Boreal are most active
 - State is a member of Western Alaska
 - No State or NGO participation in Northwest Boreal

The Fish and Wildlife Service's eco systems unit is moving into BLM/CTF.

Kelleher spoke about the following planning efforts:

- AFO Donlin Gold EIS
- Haines Block Amendment-Supplemental Ring of Fire-new information on ACEC issue
 - Looking into other options for heli-skiing

Nixon Fork Mine is not operating at this time due to gold prices

Susitna-Watana mitigation measures for BLM lands

- Priority use is for power development
- On state selected, state top filed, BLM managed land

Kelleher mentioned the work of Kathy Leonard, retired GFO employee, as a campground host for 15 years and the BLM Legend Award winner Marcia Butorac. She won the award for a lifetime of achievement in Recreation work.

RAC member **Little**, asked what the public role in the LCCs has been. **Kelleher** said it has been mostly agency participation to date, with it being mostly scientific researchers.

RAC member **Carroll**, asked where the Donlin Gold mine is located. **Kelleher** said it is near Sleetmute and Red Devil. Further information provided by RAC member **Stanley Foo**, the site is closer to the villages of Crooked Creek, Napaimute and Aniak.

RAC member, **Roy Ashenfelter**, asked about the Nome Roadhouse status. **Kelleher** said it is on BLM managed land and is on State over selected land.

RAC member, **Carroll**, asked if Recreation fees are used to repair flood damaged camp grounds. When needed they are.

To see a copy of the presentation go to: [<INSERT LINK URL Here>](#)

Kelleher and **Jena Daly** presented a PowerPoint on the Bering Sea Western Interior planning process. To see a copy of the presentation go to: [<INSERT LINK URL Here>](#)

RAC member, **Carroll**, asked what criteria were used for the planning boundary. They used both resource and administrative criteria. Jena added that the planning covers the whole state, taking into

account other lands. She also mentioned that there has been public, tribal and agency development in the process.

RAC member, **McClintock**, asked who has jurisdiction over the rivers. BLM Eastern Interior Field Manager **Lenore Heppler** answered back that if the river is navigable then the state manages it.

RAC member, **David Brown**, asked the difference between a RMP and EIS. The RMP is a management plan and the EIS analyzes impacts.

RAC member, **Little**, suggested taking maps to scale to the villages during scoping to assist with subsistence issues and asked who the cooperating agencies are and where the BLM is at with the study process. The cooperating agencies are the State of Alaska, FWS and BLM have addressed the study in the AMS.

RAC member, **McClintock**, cited the villages are not certain how to ask questions during scoping meetings in the villages. She suggested using trial organizations in the future to explain processes to the villages.

RAC Chairman, **McDougall**, suggested the following ideas for scoping meeting venues:

- YRD Fisheries Association
- Bering Sea Fishermen
- Western Interior Federal Subsistence RAC
- Yukon River Intertribal Watershed Council
- Kuskokwim Watershed Council

RAC member, **Brown**, asked how BLM budgets for all the planning efforts. **Cribley** answered that additional funding is secured in association with planning periods. He also mentioned the move to e-Planning for planning efforts. The web-based tool is available to the public to enable informed comments, comes from a different funding source and involves land-use plans and their amendments.

Tim Hammond, Assistant Field Manager for the Central Yukon Field Office gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Central Yukon RMP. For a copy of the presentation go to: [<INSERT LINK URL Here>](#)

RAC member, **Darcie Warden**, asked why tribes were not asked to be a cooperating agency. **Hammond** said a cooperating agency has to meet certain criteria and have land management authority. They do seek special information from the tribes on subsistence.

RAC member, **Little**, asked about wilderness designation/recommendations. These designations are not a BLM decision.

RAC member, **Gary Morrison**, asked why they do not allow recreation in reclaimed gravel pits. **Hammond** responded that it falls under concentrated use issues.

Hammond went over weed/invasive plans and Wild & Scenic Rivers.

RAC member, **Morrison** commented on how confusing the wild and scenic designations are. **Hammond** responded that those designations can only come from Congress.

RAC member, **Little**, asked how wilderness lands are inventoried. **Hammond** said they use overflights by wilderness trained staff and remote sensing.

RAC members, **Ashenfelter** and **Little**, asked how the public can make BLM aware of conflicts with subsistence so that it will feed into the RMP process. **Hammond** responded that putting it in an email or providing scoping comments will ensure it is addressed.

Lenore Heppler, Eastern Interior Field Manager, presented a PowerPoint update on the Eastern Interior. To see a copy of the presentation go to: [<INSERT LINK URL Here>](#)

RAC member, **Michael Wald** asked how the comments were weighted. **Heppler** stated that there was a 14 month public comment period. If the comments were outside the scope of the plan, they were ignored.

RAC member, **Morrison** asked about the preferred alternative. **Heppler** said they considered court decisions, legislation and policies when reviewing the alternatives and deriving at the preferred one.

RAC member, **Morrison** stated that the Wild & Scenic Rivers review was against ANILCA in that there is "no more clauses." **Heppler** pointed out that in reviewing the wilderness characteristics of the land there were several policy changes over the last five years.

RAC member, **Stan Foo** asked if there would be a supplemental EIS based on the scoping results. There will be.

RAC member, **Ashenfelter**, asked if it would affect mining activities. **Heppler** said areas remain open for mining as access corridors are not addressed in this plan.

New Placer Mining policies, **Steve Cohn, Matt Varner and John Hoppe:**

RAC members were given a copy of the new proposed mining regulations and a copy of the 2012 WO guidance.

Highlights:

Goals:

- Build on relationships with mining communities and groups
- Ensure operators are in compliance
- Look at resource itself
- Additional guidance on stream restoration measures

Hoppe went over the bond pool with the group.

Highlights:

- State & Feds developed placer application
- Water management plan
- Reclamation
- Interim
- Performance standards checklist
- Now 7 supplements
- 3 types
 - Cash bond
 - Surety bond
 - Bond pool

BLM is in the process of working with the State to ensure the bond pool is available to us.

Final guidance is projected to be ready by winter.

****This information is located on BLM mining website.**** <INSERT LINK URL Here>

Varner presented a PowerPoint on stream restoration. To see a copy go to: <INSERT LINK URL Here>

RAC member, **Darcie Warden** asked if there is a plan to mitigate current mining operations before damage occurs. **Varner** responded that they will encourage mining in sub stream to keep erosion from worsening.

RAC member, **Little** asked about the expense and who would cover it. **Varner** said the expense would be covered in the bond pool upfront.

RAC member, **Ashenfelter** asked about past mining activities affecting areas with returning fish and if the operators would be held accountable for the rehabilitation of those areas. **Varner** said this was not addressed in this plan since this is not much placer mining occurring near salmon streams.

RAC members, **Ashenfelter** and Chairman **McDougall** talked about the cumulative effects of placer mining in certain areas of the state, specifically Nome and **McDougall** went on to compliment the work done in the Kokomo area.

RAC member, **Little** suggested citing the AMA to help explain and educate others on the process.

RAC member, **Wald** suggested staggering the roll out to mitigate frustrations, but otherwise liked the plan.

At 3:05 p.m., RAC Coordinator, **Thom Jennings** asked if anyone wanted to participate in the public comment period. There were no public comments.

Round Robin:

RAC member, **Little** talked about using a private non-profit to raise capital needs funding.

Steve Cohn suggested the development of a friends group across the nation to develop needed partnerships.

Kelleher gave the examples of two existing friends groups in Alaska, the Friends of the Campbell Creek Science Center and the Copper River Watershed project.

Cohn suggested a partnership in AK focused on rivers' connections to fisheries and offshore development. Student researchers could be used to gather baseline data.

RAC member **McClintock** recognized RAC member **Ashenfelter's** term on the RAC

RAC member **McClintock** motioned to adjourn the meeting. RAC member, **Ashenfelter** seconded the motion.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

RAC Meeting, 10-30-13

Council members present: Michael Wald, David Brown, Sharon McClintock, Gary Morrison, Michael McDougall, Roy Ashenfelter, Peter Fix, Suzanne Little, Samantha Carroll, Chris Degernes, Darcie Warden, and Stan Foo.

BLM Representatives Present: Bud Cribley, Erin Curtis, Tim Hammond, Steve Hartmann, Lenore Heppler, Steve Cohn, Karen Kelleher, Jena Daly, Thom Jennings, Jolie Pollet, Ron Dunton, Callie Webber, Teresa McPherson, Brenda TakesHorse, Matt Varner, and John Hoppe.

Members of the Public present: None.

Meeting brought to order by RAC Chair **Mike McDougall** at 9:15 a.m.

REA Presentation, **Scott Guyer**:

Guyer presented a PPT presentation of the REAs. For a copy of the PPT go to: [<INSERT LINK URL Here>](#)

Highlights:

- 7 began in 2010
- approach land management from a regional landscape basis
- assist managers in making land management decisions based on sound management questions
- REA meeting to be held in November
- BLM Project Lead-Scott Guyer

Comments/Questions:

RAC member, **Suzanne Little** asked how local TEK is being incorporated. **Guyer** answered that at the beginning of the process community meetings were held and additional management questions were garnered from those meetings. There is also a group at the National Heritage Program that is gathering TEK data for the REAs. There is no process established to gather knowledge for data gaps in this process.

RAC member, **Stan Foo** talked about the various management plans discussed yesterday and wondered how the REAs fit with the RMPs and if they overlap and are possibly redundant. **Guyer** said they are using the Central Yukon REA to assist with the Central Yukon RMP and plan to do more in the future.

Karen Kelleher also cited the BSWI, Central Yukon, and Seward Peninsula REAs provide most of the data. There is enough continuity across the landscape that a lot of the information gathered is applicable to all plans. They may be able to adopt the data in **the e siting plan** as opposed to a plan revision.

Steve Hartmann stated the results of the REA are intended to be updated over time as funding is available. It will also be used for EIS. **Guyer** agreed and cited that the amount and type of research can vary from REA to REA. He sees climate change data as an important product that will come out of these efforts.

RAC member, **Little** asked what types of public available results will be available. **Guyer** said a written report, data layers, data sets, types of TEK found and a data portal with models, maps, demonstration of the effects of fire, etc. He also said if you go to the BLM-AK website the REA information is there.

RAC member, **Samantha Carroll** asked the current status of NSREA. It began in February and all management questions and conservation elements **<incomplete sentence>**. Go to the national heritage program and there are links to it. **<INSERT LINK URL Here>**

RAC member, **Darcie Warden** asked how the planning areas were determined. The REA boundaries were determined based on what eco-regions were most alike in their ecological features.

RAC member, **Foo** made the observation that half of the state looks like it has not been covered and would it be in the future. Scott said it would be based on funding and need. There would have to be a significant amount of BLM land for us to do it. Other agencies can use them as well. **Foo** also asked about the public process. **Guyer** said they go through management questions and conservation elements internally and present them to the public at community meetings. They also work with the National Heritage Foundation and put out a newsletter to reach the public. They have regularly scheduled meetings and the public participates in some of those. They also present results through the report.

RAC member, **Roy Ashenfelter** asked if BLM land includes Teshupuk Lake. BLM State Director, **Bud Cribley** said it does and **Guyer** said there is BLM land all around that area. **Ashenfelter** cited the industry's desire to access land through the permitting process. He wondered if the REA would work well in this process. Areas like this are very sensitive to caribou and bird species. **Guyer** said the conservation elements are that area will be evaluated and climate change impacts into the future will be evaluated. Development will also be addressed and how it might impact conservation elements. **Cribley** added that the integrated activity plan for the NPR-A and that area was very data rich so the decisions were made based on that data. Development at this time was deferred based on that data. The overlap of high mineral development and conservation areas are being **addressed to inform land use decisions**. He hopes the Seward Peninsula data can be shared at the next meeting and the Natural Heritage Foundation can do a presentation. Other agencies that were skeptical at first are now getting on board with the effort.

RAC member, **McDougall** asked how data was gathered and if it was a consistent source. **Guyer** said the first one was done by Nature Serve and subsequent ones by the Heritage Nature. BLM has been hands on directing the effort.

RAC member, **McClintock** said a lot of the integrated planning was motivated in 2011 when President Obama directed the DOI to conduct annual lease sales and the need for additional data was identified. Is geophysical data part of this. **Kelleher** said DNR has been as involved as they can be.

NSSI Update:

NSSI Director, **John Payne**, presented a PPT on NSSI, integrated arctic management report and scenario planning. To see a copy of this PPT go to: [<INSERT LINK URL Here>](#)

Highlights:

- UAF GINA catalog. (Access through norrrhtslope.org)
- Arctic Council Working Group focusing on biodiversity and circumpolar monitoring. (Includes terrestrial and marine)
- Scenario Planning. Report to congress with recommendations for an adopted integrated arctic management approach
- Ongoing White House leadership on arctic issues both nationally and internationally
- Strengthening partnerships with other international communities and state of AK
- President signed a solid arctic strategy plan for the US arctic, opening the door to scenario planning. Focus on multiple issues.drivers. UAF has the agreement to do this research.
- Scenario planning is based on stakeholder input. Determine type of monitoring will be done to develop a simulation model. Looking at: shipping structure, types of commodities they will see in the future.

Comments/Questions:

RAC member, **Mike Wald** asked what the BLM budget is annually for this. **Payne** said NSSI is at about \$1 million and \$15,000.00 from NSB and DNR.

NPR-A Update, Lon Kelly, Bridget Psarianos:

Kelly gave a presentation on the NPR-A. To see a copy go to: [<INSERT LINK URL Here>](#)

Highlights:

- Standing up NPR-A working group per February ROD. ROD is on line at the BLM website. [<INSERT LINK URL Here>](#)
- Recent workshop in Barrow to decide scope and membership
- Plan to have subsequent meetings in conjunction with NSB meetings
- Next meeting tentatively scheduled in December.

Comments/questions:

RAC member, **Foo** asked if travel funds will be provided for village travel to the meetings. **Kelly** said they will look at getting them a stipend.

It was asked if some of the responsibilities will be shifted to the subsistence advisory panel. Lon said they focus on different things. They are tied in to the extent that a permit would not be given to an energy developer without them first giving a presentation to the subsistence advisory panel.

It was asked if the meetings are open to the public. Lon said not at this time and it is not a FACA group.

GMT 1 Update, Bridget Psarianos:

Psarianos presented on the GMT 1. To see a copy of this presentation go to: [<INSERT LINK URL Here>](#)

Highlights:

- 5 production pads close to Nuiqsut and pipeline.
- Some road and pipeline on BLM and Kupik lands
- 14 miles west of CD 1
- Supported by CD 1
- Any crude would be supplied via pipeline through TAPS
- Supplemental EIS needed to address Conoco's proposal to allow public comment
- Air quality MOU to include air quality working group to review impacts
- Draft SEIS published in Dec.
- Comment period Feb. to May
- Final in May

Comments/Questions:

RAC member, **Darcie Warden** asked if health issues would be addressed. **Psarianos** cited the North Slope Borough Health Impact Assessment they are using and SLR has been contracted to look into it. It will impact the public impact analysis.

RAC member, **Foo** asked how the public hearings work, **Psarianos** said it is one meeting and it also focuses on subsistence.

RAC member, **McDougall** asked if just changes or new circumstances will be looked at. **Psarianos** said they asked what else should be considered. He also asked what the public has asked about. She said they asked how air quality was being measured and how they are dealing with polar bear listings.

RAC member, **Warden** asked if they will identify a preferred alternative. **Psarianos** said they will and commented on the 2004 alternative being used by Conoco.

Legacy wells Update, Rob Brumbaugh and Lon Kelly:

Brumbaugh presented a PPT presentation on the Legacy Wells Strategy. To see a copy of this presentation go to: [<INSERT LINK URL Here>](#)

Highlights:

- 136 test holes
- 2 distinct exploration periods between 1940-1982. Army and USGS
- 1976 BLM became responsible with managing NPR-A surface only

- 1982 BLM was given subsurface responsibility as well.
- 2003 all wells assessed and led to 2004 wells summary report
- Remediation on wells began in 2004
- Assessment of wells includes: wells needing no remediation, wells being used by USGS, and wells needing action.
- Assesses sub-surface and surface risks to determine prioritization of cleanup

Comments/questions:

RAC member, **Little** asked how solid waste from the sites will be disposed of. It will be back hauled out or slung out with a helicopter.

RAC member, **Carroll** asked how you will deal with a natural seep vs. human impact. They will concentrate on removing the site.

RAC member, **McClintock** asked out of 136 wells identified, BLM showed an effort to remediate some, but of the 50 wells left undone, is the remediation being done in house or contracted. It is being contracted. BLM meets with AOGCC monthly on the wells and if the situation warrants they can be adjusted accordingly and plugging activities are contingent upon funding and prioritization. Groups of wells in the same area will likely all be plugged at the same time to save money.

RAC member, **Dave Brown** asked if cost estimates for each well have been identified. To be determined.

RAC member, **McClintock** asked what criteria will be used to select contractors. To be determined.

RAC member, **McDougall**, asked of the 50 wells identified how many are deemed as high potential. Rob cited a handout that gives the information. He said during the next steps they will identify a full time manager, produce an agreement with USGS for temperature wells

RAC member, **Gary Morrison** said at the last meeting he had a feeling that BLM was doing all they could with the funding they had and then the state began to complain. **Cribley** said the attention that senator Murksowki brought to it helped to secure funding. He is unsure of any other coordination. The helium Act assisted in securing \$50 mil. The big issue was finding funding. He sees the elevation of the issue as giving credence to the need for it.

RAC member, **McClintock** also cited Charisse Millet's work on it. She also cited that under the Indian Self Determination act those Native companies should be considered to do the work. Bud said they are in the process of formulating those plans based on established timeframe and funding sources.

Lon said they have worked with the Corp of Engineers on some wells in the past through an Assistance Agreement and can do so in the future for some of them.

Alaska Fire Service (AFS) Update, Kent Slaughter:

Alaska Fire Service manager, **Kent Slaughter** presented a PPT on AFS operations. [<INSERT LINK URL Here>](#)

Highlights:

- DOI's Fire Management agency for Alaska
- BLM aviation office for Alaska
- Implement land management decisions made by agencies
- Major changes made recently to aviation acquisition services vendor payments
- Consolidated all internal non fire aviation dispatching to Anchorage
- No 206 contract costs this year
- Protect 194 acres
- 25 mil budget
- 400 employees. (a lot are seasonal)
- 131 fires of 700 acres this fire season, 3 large fires
- Assisted FEMA to provide flood support in Galena in August/September
- Cross billing with Army and State for fire suppression

Comments/questions:

RAC member, **Wald** said he has heard from many vendors that the new system is much better.

RAC member, **Little** asked how the Corporations are represented and if there are agreements in place with them. **Slaughter** said they are part of a group of land managers who make fire management decisions. There is no written agreement with each corporation.

RAC member, **Morrison** asked if the Army pays for fire suppression support on their lands. They do not as they have an agreement with BLM for rental fees and utilities in exchange for fire suppression support. A new agreement is being negotiated due to recent costs of fires. This will involve cross billing for services.

RAC member, **Darcie Warden** asked if are there other areas in the fire service program the RAC could focus on. **Slaughter** said the only issue he could see that needs to be addressed is the IT issue, but he is unsure it would be appropriate for the RAC to address. He said he could report back to this group this spring with the outcome and see if there are any things they could help with. He also thought they might review the fire management plans and see if there are areas needing revision.

RAC member, **Wald** asked if fire management is addressed at a statewide level with no regional plan, **Slaughter** said the statewide plan does tier down to local land management plans. **Slaughter** did mention that the various plans have different protection levels depending on the resources impacted.

Alaska Conveyance Update, Ron Dunton, Lori Nelson:

Deputy State Director, **Ron Dunton** gave a verbal briefing of the BLM-Alaska conveyance program to show status of program through a presentation in the map room.

Highlights:

- Depicts patented lands to State, 63 million of 103
- ANCSA Patented lands
- Townships with conveyance issues noted (looked at 18000)
- 26-27 million acres left to survey, 23 million of state and 4 million of ANCSA lands
- Acres that are ICd or need resurvey are noted
- Lands ready for patent
- State selections and topfiles are noted 16 selected, 7 top filed)
- Lands still to be surveyed
- Priorities are
- ANCSA. 14H1, village, Corporations and individuals
- State

RAC member, **McClintock** noted that the last letter sent from DOI differed in stats. **Dunton** said our records are up to date.

RAC member, **Morrison**, asked if the state is locked into their selections. **Dunton** said they are still only entitled to 5 million acres. **Cribley** reiterated that they are dealing with what has already been selected at this time.

Dunton said the state zeroed out their priorities and have to reprioritize.

RAC member, **McClintock** asked for an explanation of top filing. Lands that are withdrawn and not available for selection, but could be available later if the withdrawal goes away. Can BLM decide that. No only secretary can. **Carroll** mentioned that recommendations can be made though and **Dunton** agreed. **McClintock** also mentioned how rejection of ANCSA lands can result in a top filing.

Can the State reject lands. **Dunton** said he asked that question to the Solicitor and the answer was no. They are looking at what BLM would like to keep and will relay that to the State, but they are not bound to it.

How many acres is the state over selected by. A total of 7 million.

RAC member, **Morrison** asked if Sealaska legislation goes through will that increase the amounts of lands re selected by other Native Corps? **Dunton** said it would take further legislation. **Cribley** said that opportunity is there.

RAC member, **McClintock** mentioned CIRIs issue with Susitna-Watana and how difficult it will be to determine land ownership and the cost associated. **Dunton** agreed.

14(h)(1) lands are cemetery or historical sites. They are doing 100 per year and they have approximately 600 left. **Cribley** pointed out the remote nature of those lands and the expense involved.

RAC member, **McClintock** asked if when surveying you are looking at ANCSA. BLM-Alaska's Land Survey Supervisor, **Michael Schoder** said if it is ANCSA lands those regulations are followed.

Cribley mentioned the complexity of the workload is important to understand. It can take years to resolve some issues. BLM has taken a big hit in the conveyance budget which also accounts for the slowdown. **Dunton** mentioned the amount of staff for the program has been reduced to almost half.

RAC member, **McClintock** said we have state and ANCSA lands to be surveyed for patent. She sees a disparity between what is left to survey to ANCSA and state. **Dunton** said he would go through the priorities and maybe that would answer her questions.

Dunton mentioned village close outs and how important they are. One change has been to focus on closing villages out. RAC member, **Little** asked for a copy of those. **Dunton** will provide copies. The goal is to close out 40 in FY 14. He pointed out the potential closures that can turn into actual closures by the end of fiscal year. The goal is to have less than 100 villages left by end of FY 14.

RAC member, **McClintock**, asked if it reflects a change in policy that you can get 40 done in a year. **Dunton** said it is a change in focus for the program. She reflected on some villages that are still waiting and still sees a disparity in what has been conveyed to villages vs. the State. They want a full conveyance as mandated by law. She reflected on the discretion BLM management has within their budget to direct their funding to conveyance. **Cribley** said that is what this effort is trying to accomplish so they can speed up this process by seeing what needs to be done so they can focus getting it done. The majority of the funding is going to ANCSA conveyance. RAC member, **McClintock** said she thought BLM needs to do a better job at getting the information out there. **Cribley** said they have been briefing congressional members on where they are in the program as there have been many changes to bring a better understanding to it. **Cribley** offered to brief anyone who has concerns with the program. RAC member, **McClintock** asked if all state surveys have been done in house or are they contracted out. **Schoder** said it has been challenging the last few years due to receiving funding during the 3rd quarter each year. Since taking over cadastral survey he has worked hard to prioritize the work geographically. He also stated the 14c is not part of the village closure. Once they get the map of **boundaries it is ready once there is money to survey it.**

Dunton mentioned the substitute land parcel issue is creating a lot of work. He also mentioned the work done with FWS on land exchanges to assist with village corporation conveyances.

Dunton stated the bulk of their operational dollars will be spent on ANCSA conveyances. RAC member, **McClintock** mentioned how state land conveyance used to be contracted out and why is that not being done now. **Schoder** said the future will involve contracting. RAC member, **McClintock** said she is speaking for her village constituency over their concern over not having complete survey. She cited the fact that Native villages are often amenable to providing contract dollars to get complete conveyance. **Cribley** reiterated that BLM is doing no less than what is required by law. He also mentioned a

renegotiating agreement with the state to get full conveyance. They are in discussions with the state. **Dunton** reflected on RAC member **McClintock's** comments on what message was sent out last administration and cited how it was not telling the whole story and how that created budget cuts in the program. This did not account for the expense of survey work. It is the most expensive part of that process. RAC member, **Little** cited a change in the survey manual that allowed them to do less than adequate survey. She said she would like to see a subcommittee formed to learn more about the issues.

RAC member, **McDougall** asked the group how the RAC can contribute to getting this program complete and asked if a subcommittee should be formed. **Dunton** asked if they could think about this first. RAC member, **Wald** mentioned that he thought BLM was really getting their head around the issue and he sees it as a step in the right direction.

Someone (?) asked how often the ALIS map on the website (?) is updated. **Schoder** said it is our official portal and it is up to date.

RAC Business, Mike McDougall and Thom Jennings:

After a vote of the RAC Membership, Vice-chair, **Peter Fix** will become the new Chair. RAC Chair **Mike McDougall** opened nominations for the 2013-2104 RAC vice chair.

Suzanne Little was nominated by Samantha Carroll and seconded by **Chris Degernes**. **Little** accepted the nomination. A vote was taken resulting in **Suzanne Little** being elected vice chair.

Next three meetings tentative dates/locations :

Thom went over possible dates:

- 1st week in April possibly Fairbanks
- 1st week in June
- Sometime in August

The group was amenable to an April meeting. RAC Chair, **McDougall** suggested a field trip to AFS. **Cribley** also mentioned the permafrost tunnel being a great place to visit too. It would fit in with the issues BLM deals with.

Cribley also mentioned a field trip this summer to Coldfoot to see the Arctic Interagency Visitors Center, discuss the Central Yukon RMP and meet with community members in that area to discuss Dalton Corridor issues. BLM Staff member **Erin Curtis** asked if June or August is the preference for the summer meeting. The team said early June for weather and bug issues. RAC members **McDougall** and **Degernes** cannot make a June meeting.

Jennings said the group would most likely meet in Anchorage in October or maybe Fairbanks. RAC member, **Morrison** cannot attend between 14-22. RAC member **Little** reminded the BLM to select a date not conflicting with AFN.

Jennings will continue to use the Doodle Poll to find suitable meeting dates.

Outgoing RAC Chair, **McDougall** discussed a couple of potential subcommittees to address the conveyance issues and the placer mining policy.

Placer Mining Subcommittee, Goals and Objectives:

Gary Morrison, lead

Samantha Carroll

Chris Degernes

Mike McDougall as a stakeholder.

Goal: Develop an effective communication and outreach strategy for the BLM placer mining policy and enforcement of that policy.

Objectives:

- Identify and reach out to stakeholders, i.e. miners association
- Identify and reach out to cooperating agencies and NGOs (Trout Unlimited, etc.)
- Identify potential funding sources to help administer policies (AMA, 40-mile, SALCHA)
- Help identify metrics to evaluate the new programs effectiveness. (Outreach)
- **How do we measure success?**
 - **Success in communication and compliance**
 - **Defensive**

Cribley mentioned publicizing the project to secure mining and mitigation funds. He said **Steve Cohn** will be the subcommittee's point of contact. RAC member, **Morrison** also suggested RAC member, **Carroll** be his local contact.

RAC member, **Morrison** asked if it would be of value for the subcommittee to contact **Steve Burrell** of AMA in April prior to the meeting. **Jennings** said that was a good idea. He also said a meeting here prior to April will also work. BLM staff member **John Hoppe** was also mentioned as a good BLM contact. **Curtis** recommended working through **Cohn**. RAC member, **Carroll** asked if they could put people from AMA on the subcommittee. **Curtis** said they would have to be put on by the chair. **Jennings** reiterated that the subcommittee just gathers information and presents alternatives to the group.

Land Conveyance Subcommittee:

Sharon McClintock, lead

Samantha Carroll

Suzanne Little

David Brown

This subcommittee will work with BLM staff member **Ron Dunton** on this to develop goal/objectives.

RAC member, **McClintock** said there may a need to be a subcommittee for RDIs. The State is applying for many of them and the villages do not know what they are. RAC member, **Little** recommended setting goals during their first meeting. **Jennings** asked if RDIs can be addressed by the same committee that addresses land conveyance. RAC member, **McClintock** sees it as a different issue. **Cribley** recommended a presentation on RDIs at the next meeting to determine how to address it. RAC member **Little** said that during lunch they talked about doing informational briefings prior to a RAC meeting. **Curtis** said she believed that since they are a FACA group any meetings the group or subcommittee conduct have to be publicized. She will check to make sure. RDIs will be on the next agenda.

RAC member, **Peter Fix** said there are ways to announce it.

Cribley mentioned the two land use plans in the scoping process. He asked if the group wants to set up a couple of subcommittees to engage staff on those plans. RAC member **McDougall** thought it best to wait until after scoping occurs. RAC member, **Little** said she is very interested in working in public participation and would like to do so to the extent possible. **Jennings** asked if a subcommittee to develop more ideas of things we are missing in public outreach would be a good idea. He asked **Cribley** if **Serena Sweet** or **Bridget Psarianos** could come in and explain to the RAC how they conduct public engagement due to RAC questions on how they are conducted. It was decided a subcommittee would be formed as follows:

Public Participation Subcommittee:

Suzanne Little, lead

Sharon McClintock

Samantha Carroll

Darcie Warden

Serena Sweet will be this group's BLM contact.

RAC member **Fix** asked for the meeting minutes to be shared with the group sooner.

June Lowery will email the group membership information to **Jennings** tomorrow and he will review and send to the RAC.

Resolutions.

None noted from the group. RAC Chair **McDougall** was working on how to encourage inter agency cooperation more in these times of reduced budgets to streamline processes between agencies. **Jennings** mentioned some things BLM and FWS have combined for efficiency. The aviation vendor payments are also DOI wide. RAC member, **Little** asked what the protocol is for resolutions. RAC Chair, **McDougall** said he can draft a resolution to be sent out at the spring meeting. **Cribley** said the board can draft it at the meeting too and vote on it. RAC member, **McClintock** mentioned a prior resolution on land conveyance and the need for a process for resolutions.

RAC member, **Little** asked who is in charge of the agenda. **Jennings** develops it with input from the RAC, leadership team and the State Director. RAC member, **Fix** recommended giving the RAC general subject matters to consider. **Cribley** suggested providing the RAC a preliminary agenda for review prior to finalization. RAC member, **Little** asked if the chair makes a recommendation to the DFO is that appropriate. It is technically BLM's job to develop it per the charter. RAC member, **Fix** said some of the presentations were pretty basic and he thinks polling the RAC for subject matter would be appropriate to prevent unnecessary information being presented. He also asked if it is necessary for so many informational briefings. **Cribley** said some of them were just to highlight issues BLM is dealing with now. They want to get the RAC more involved. Future meetings will have more targeted agendas. RAC member, **Fix** mentioned the Eastern Interior RMP briefing and how useful knowing what comments they are receiving are.

RAC member **Little** said it would be useful to know what kind of information the BLM is expecting from this group. **Cribley** said that will definitely occur. RAC member, **Carroll** asked if they would get materials ahead of time. Materials will be provided ahead of time.

A motioned to adjourn was made by RAC member, **Fix** and seconded by RAC member, **Morrison**. The meeting was adjourned at 4:19 p.m.