

Western Oregon Resource Advisory Committee

Summary Meeting Notes

June 22, 2023

8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

North Umpqua Ranger Station – Glide, Ore.

Attendance

Advisory Council Members

Category 1: Bree Yednock, Thomas Carstens, Samara Phelps, Dino Venti

Category 2: Sarah Rockwell, Sue Martino, Sophia Kaelke, Ken McCall

Category 3: Jack Edwards, Michael Kennedy

Public

Doug Robertson, Executive Director of Association of O&C Counties

BLM

Megan Harper, WORAC coordinator

Heather Whitman, Designated Federal Official, Roseburg District Manager

Amanda Hoffman, Cascades Field Office Manager, NW Oregon District

Cheyne Rossbach, Assistant Field Manager, Roseburg District

Todd Forbes, Lakeview District Manager

Valerie Lenhartzen, Myrtlewood Field Office Manager, Coos Bay District

Elizabeth Burghard, Medford District Manager

Kyle Sullivan, Public Affairs Specialist, Medford District

John Harper, Supervisory Outdoor Recreation Planner, Coos Bay District

Stephanie Messerle, OR/WA BLM Title II coordinator

8:30 AM Welcome

- DFO Heather Whitman called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. Chair Samara Philips made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of the last RAC meeting. Ken McCall seconded the motion. The motion was approved 9-0.

8:45 AM BLM's Restoration Landscapes Initiative – Heather Whitman

- DFO Heather Whitman gave a brief overview of the BLM's restoration landscapes initiative, of which there are several in Oregon. The landscape that overlaps with the geographic area of the Western Oregon RAC is the Southwest Oregon Restoration Landscape. This landscape includes most all of the Roseburg District, and a portion of the Medford and Coos Bay Districts, with the goal of restoring salmon habitat and watershed health.
- RAC members asked if there was information on the restoration landscapes they could share with their communities and if there is an opportunity to apply

for grant funding to complete restoration work in the landscape. The BLM committed to sharing information and a website link with the RAC members. To date, there are no public grant opportunities associated with the restoration landscape initiative.

- The group asked if the funds could be used on private lands, and they can only be used on public lands.

9:05 AM Title II project application review update – Stephanie Messerle

- Stephanie Messerle, BLM fisheries biologist and OR/WA Title II coordinator, shared that the latest information on the status of the latest round of Title II applications.
- The BLM received 48 Title II applications, and are being reviewed internally.
- The RAC provided feedback that the spreadsheets are incredibly helpful, including the county by county funding spreadsheet to have more spaces to make personal notes, they would like to see the project binder organized to follow the agenda rather than by county.

9:20 AM District Round Table – What's Going on in Western Oregon –

- The western Oregon District Managers gave an update on current events in each of their respective districts, including current status of timber sales and forest management, Hult Dam removal, Loon Lake Recreation Site repairs, interest in lands on the North Spit of Coos Bay, post-fire recovery, etc.

10:20 AM BREAK

10:30 AM Update on fee implementation on the westside districts/Smullin Visitor Center operations – Coos Bay and Medford Districts

- The Coos Bay District shared an update on implementation of the increased recreation fees at Edson and Sixes Campground that the RAC approved last May.
- The Medford District gave an update on their plans to only accept payment cards (no cash) at the Smullin Visitor Center.
- The RAC provided feedback that the fee increases made sense and are glad they are being implemented. The RAC members expressed concern that sites are going cashless, and that you have to make reservations so many places. They would like to continue to have the opportunity to have first-come, first-serve opportunities and to also be able to pay cash were it can be safely collected.

10:45 AM Reimagining Recreation Sites after the 2020 Fires: Discussion and Field Trip preview – NW and Roseburg Districts

- Amanda Hoffman of Northwest Oregon and Cheyne Rossbach of Roseburg District both gave presentations on the status of planning for and rebuilding several recreation sites after the 2020 Labor Day fires.
- Amanda Hoffman shared that so far the district has removed hazardous materials and hazard trees at the sites. Several sites, including Fisherman's Bend is open. The district has also completed engineering assessment. The District is doing some public engagement to learn about needs of the local community

and future planning. Due to funding concerns, the district mostly plans to rebuild the recreation sites in the same locations with the same footprint as they had pre-fire because they completed some comprehensive recreation planning in 2016. The BLM is interested in doing additional public involvement to see if the plans they made in 2016 are still valid.

- Dino is part of the Resilient Headwaters group that is helping Forest Service, BLM, and others to put together a comprehensive trail plan for the Santiam River Canyon. He encouraged the BLM to fold this group into the conversation on rebuilding the recreation site.
- Cheyne Rossbach gave an overview of the sites impacted by the Archie Creek Fire. The district is looking at several opportunities to engage with the public on what the damaged sites may look like in the future. They are interested in rebuilding to accommodate larger trailers, new boat take-outs on the Umpqua River, and other improvements. They are also interested in knowing if people still want to camp in the same locations because they are open sites now. They expect to start public scoping for an environmental assessment in the fall of 2023.

11:45 AM Travel reimbursement, next meeting dates, and wrap-up – Megan, Heather

- Megan reminded RAC members that travelled to the meeting to turn in their hotel receipts as soon as possible to get reimbursed.
- The next WORAC meeting is scheduled for October 2023. The purpose of the meeting is to review and recommend Title II projects for funding under the Secure Rural Schools legislation.

12:00 PM Public Comment Period and Lunch

- There were no public comments.

12:30 PM Adjourn meeting and transition to field trip – Depart for Susan Creek Falls, Emerald Waters, and Millpond Recreation Sites

4:25 PM Meeting adjourned