



Bears Ears National Monument

Monument Advisory Committee Meeting Notes

Wed., Nov. 8, 2023, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Meeting format: In person at the Hideout in Monticello, UT and on Zoom

In Attendance:

Monument Advisory Committee Members: Lee Bennett, Louis Williams, Shawn Ivins, and Zeb Dalton attended the meeting in person. Eve Tallman, Mark Boshell, Dallin Tait, Denyce White, Davina Smith, and Angelo Baca attended the meeting online. Brooks Britt, Regina Lopez-Whiteskunk, and Kelly Pehrson were not able to attend.

BLM/USFS: Jared Lundell (BLM), Michael Engelhart (USDA FS), Jake Palma (BLM), Emilee Helton (BLM), Jill Stephenson (BLM), Chris Kramb (USDA FS), Orlando Cortez (USDA FS), Ryan Nehl (USDA FS) and Rachel Wootton (BLM)

Public/Media: There were about 12 concurrent viewers including members of the public, non-governmental organizations and educational institutions, but more individuals joined and left throughout the day.

There was a quorum during the meeting; Chair and Vice Chair were appointed.

Agenda:

TIME	TOPIC	PRESENTER
10:00 a.m.	Meeting logistics	Jared Lundell – BLM Monticello Assistant Field Manager for Cultural and Planning
10:05 a.m.	Welcome and Introductions Management Updates	Jacob Palma – BLM Monticello Field Manager (Acting Designated Federal Officer) Michael Englehardt – USDA Forest Service District Ranger
10:30 a.m.	Federal Advisory Committee roles and responsibilities	Jacob Palma – BLM Monticello Field Manager (Acting Designated Federal Officer)
10:45 a.m.	Resource Management Plan – Planning Process Overview	BLM and USDA Forest Service Planning Team
11:15 a.m.	Discussion of planning efforts, public engagement and next steps	BLM and USDA Forest Service Planning Team

12:00 p.m.	Lunch	
1:15 p.m.	Public Comment Period	Members of the public
2:15 p.m.	Continued discussion of planning efforts	BLM and USDA Forest Service Planning Team
3:45 p.m.	Action Items/Input on next meeting time, date, and agenda	Jared Lundell – BLM Monticello Assistant Field Manager for Cultural and Planning
4:00 p.m.	Adjourn	All

10:00 am – Meeting Logistics

This meeting was held as a hybrid format. Discussion on how to participate online for MAC members and public attendees during the public comment period.

10:05 am – Welcome and Introductions, Management Updates

Welcome and Introductions: Introductions of in-person attendees and online attendees. See attendance list above. Presented agenda. See agenda above.

Management Updates:

Rachel Wootton:
 -Update on reimbursement from last MAC meeting. Federal profiles have been created and reimbursements should be coming soon. Rachel is expecting an update next week and will keep member informed.

Michael Engelhart:
 -Regional Forester review occurred last week. Regional and Washington leadership took a two day tour of Monticello and Moab Ranger Districts. Discussions captured updates and highlights from 2023 field season. Highlights included (but were not limited to) the following partnerships:

- Tribes, including BEC;
- Youth conservations corps (5 crews on the landscape working on site stabilization at Cream Pots and improvement of various trailheads);
- Ancestral Land Corp (11 weeks of work improving signage at trailheads and hardened sites);
- Cooperative agreement with San Juan County Roads (significant amount of road maintenance was accomplished during the last field season with funding mostly provided by GAOA);
- CNHA funded project work/worked with Youth Corp and Tribal Nations;
- Spring Stewardship institute assessed spring sites in the Monument and provided suggestion on restoration projects. Grazing permittees assisted with spring restoration work as well;

- Moving forward on the contract for the Tribal youth Engagement Center at Kigalia Ranger Station;
- Law enforcement provided more on-the-ground patrols.

-The Forest Plan Revision is out for public scoping until November 15. The forest plan will affect land use level management of the BENM through management such as recommended wilderness. The last virtual meeting of the public comment period was November 8, 2023. Michael invited everyone to participate in the meeting.

Jake Palma:

-Kane Gulch Ranger Station is closed for the season.

-Eclipse occurred in October within the BENM; BLM coordinated with State and Counties in planning efforts to manage the expected visitation which resulted in a smooth event. Jake asked if attendees have noticed any impacts from the eclipse, and if so, to report those to the BLM. The BLM will continue to monitor the landscape for impacts.

-Proposed Utah Trust Lands land exchange: BLM is doing a lot of on the field work regarding the exchange, including inventorying the land being proposed for exchange (approximately 200 acres) over the next few month. Timeline of exchange is still unknown.

-Jake discussed the powerpoint slide showing MFO visitation from 2013 to 2023. 90% of the visitation is estimated to occur within the monument (most visitation tracking is done within the monument). Visitation increased when the Monument was designated (2017); decreased in 2020 from COVID, etc.; and increased again in 2021, with a tapering, downward trend over the last two years. Half of the visitation numbers for 2023 are predicted to be from the Indian Creek area. Butler Wash, San Juan River, and Valley of the Gods see the next largest visitation numbers in monument.

--Shawn asks if the monument has received more funding after its designation.

- Jake: some base funding was received for staffing. Other additional funding received has been used for partnerships (e.g., Access Fund).
- Michael: USFS has not seen an increase in funding but the local agency has reprogrammed more of the base funding to Monument for project funds and implementation level projects. Expanded staff at the Regional level in range, archaeology, law enforcement, etc. GAOA has provided additional funding for projects.

--Mark asks how visitors are behaving and if increased visitation has resulted in increased issues such as vandalism.

- Jared: there have been some cases of vandalism and a few pointed issues at archeological sites that have been discussed at previous MAC meetings. In general, impacts are seen in areas like Butler Wash that see more visitation. Impacts are thought to be from sheer number of visitors over last 5 to 6 years and fragility of sites. BLM funded stabilization work in 2016/2017 (Ancestral Land Corp) to stabilize sites in Butler Wash. Much of the improvements (fill) have eroded away since, not necessarily because of pointed instances, but because of increased use of the landscape and how it is used.
- Michael: USFS does have an active investigation regarding cultural resources on the landscape but the impression is that the causation is not from increased visitation. General concern on NFS lands is increased visitation from events such as the eclipse that results in increased unattended campfires. NFS lands, they don't have many areas that received concentrated use, and those few areas that do have been hardened and are still thought to be meeting the needs. Overall, USFS is not experiencing a vast increase in public visitation.

Jake Palma: Highlights the BLM's engagement with San Juan County School District's Natural Resources Field Day. Fifty students participated in an event at Sand Island for a competitive learning opportunity where scholarships were awarded as part of the competition.

10:30 am – Federal Advisory Committee roles and responsibilities

MAC Membership Update:

-Call for nominations were put out for one vacancy (County Commission); one nomination was received but an appointment has not been made.

-Four MAC seats expire in January 2024.

- Paleontology
- Private Landowner
- Local Business Owner
- Public at Large

-Call for nominations were published in the Federal Register in October. Encouraged attendees to reach out to interested individuals to encourage to apply. Please apply before November 24, 2023.

---Zeb asks if there was a rule that states if you serve a three-year term, you are not able to reapply, as that was the understanding from some folks.

- Jake clarified that there is not a restriction on terms, regardless of the length of the term you serve (e.g., one, two, three-years).

---Louis asks if there is data available showing resources/impacts.

- Jared explains that the Rangers have field reports that monitor resources and impacts (e.g., springs). The site stewardship program helps staff 30-40 volunteers to assist with monitoring of cultural resources.
- Louis: as an operator, Louis sees the importance of these reports and that part of being a guiding is to assist with providing updates to the BLM on visitation and site impacts.
- Michael: USFS has visitation data at 6 or 7 sites on the monument that mimics the visitation trend on the BLM, however, the USFS sees much fewer visitors in general. USFS is trying to hire additional staff and expand partnerships to assist with site monitoring.

Jake Palma: asks if MAC members want to nominate a chair or vice chair. Notes that at the time, there is not a quorum, but the topic can be revisited when Davina is able to rejoin the meeting.

---Sean: asks what the role of the chair is.

- Rachel explains the chair can help shape agendas for the meetings and review notes. The vice chair helps fill in when the chair is unavailable and helps fill in the chair's roles.
- Jake asks if the MAC wants to nominate folks today.
- Eve asks if Denyce or Regina are interested in continuing to serve.
- Denyce says there is interest but she needs additional time to think about it.
- Jared suggests circling back to this topic when Davina is back.
- Consensus of the MAC is to revisit the topic in the afternoon.

10:45 am – Resource Management Plan – Planning Process Overview

Planning Process Overview:

Jared Lundell: Describes the project timeline slide. The agencies are planning to release the DEIS in November 2023. The agencies held a scoping period in August 2022 where the public was able to submit initial feedback on the planning process. The next phase will be the public comment period where the public can provide feedback on the range of alternatives.

Comments received during the public comment period will be used to reevaluate the draft plan and move towards a proposed plan and final EIS. The proposed timeline for that release is Summer 2024. Agencies intend to release ROD in Fall 2024. The 90 day comment period is anticipated to start in November and end in February. Comment reconciliation will occur throughout the spring. Summer 2024 timeframe includes development of the proposed RMP/Final EIS which includes the government consistency review and protest period.

Michael Engelhart: The USFS has adopted the BLM protest process which keeps the agencies in line timeline wise. USFS will develop a separate ROD. The intent will be to manage the monument consistently across the landscape, even with the two RODs.

--Mark asks if there is an objection process since the USFS is adopting the BLM process.

- Michael answers that the protest period will supplement the objection process but will work on getting a more definite answer.

Alternative Themes:

Jared Lundell: The AMS was developed using input received during the scoping period and proposed preliminary alternative themes. Some of these themes have changed over time. There are currently four alternatives but this does not preclude the agencies from developing additional alternatives for the draft. Additionally, a preferred alternative would not preclude the agencies from choosing a different alternative in the proposed plan.

-Jared discusses Alternative theme slide:

- Alternative A: current management and is composed of four different plans (2008 Monticello RMP, 2008 Moab RMP, 2020 BENM MMPs, 1986 Manti-La Sal National Forest LRMP).
- Alternative B: intent of direct and prescriptive management that emphasizes more signage and infrastructure on the landscape. Management would be more direct regarding visitation and range infrastructure.
- Alternative C: more indirect management that focuses on off-site interpretation and education.
- Alternative D: emphasizes natural processes, minimizing human-created facilities and management.

--Sean: Asks how Alternative B would affect grazing.

- Jared: Responds that grazing infrastructure would be encouraged to help manage grazing across the landscape.
- Sean: Clarifies this means focusing on grazing improvements.
- Jakes: The BENM RMP differs from other RMP (e.g., Monticello RMP) because this plan needs to meet the minimum bar of protecting objects in the monument.
- Sean: Asks when the alternatives will be decided.
- Jared: Plan is to release Draft RMP/EIS to the public this month.

- Jake: Clarifies that the range of alternatives is close to being finalized but a decision on the plan won't be until Fall 2024.

--Dallin: Asks how the management style would be implemented across the monument as the needs differ.

- Jared: Management would take into consideration what is needed on the landscape. The relationship of themes and alternatives is to manage towards these broader concepts (themes). For example, under Alternative C, Comb Wash RMZ may be more focused and heavily managed, while Butler Wash Road may have more discretionary management and use indirect actions. Management may be required in certain areas to protect objects.

--Eve: Asks if the MAC will be able to see the alternatives in detail today.

- Jared: Responds that we will not be able to discuss the alternatives in detail today but the agencies are working to schedule an additional MAC meeting where that could be an agenda item. Agencies are tentatively shooting for January.
- Jake: Agencies are hoping to hold a MAC meeting January 8 to be able to have a conversation with the MAC after they have had an opportunity to review the plan.

--Sean: Asks for clarification on Alternative D.

- Jared: Gives an example of LWC. BLM inventories for LWC and within RMP process, decides which LWC will be managed to protect wilderness characteristics. Fitting with the theme of Alternative D, more LWC may be managed to protect wilderness characteristics and in turn limit discretionary uses in those areas. If all LWC is managed to protect wilderness characteristics, some routes may be closed for discretionary use, as an example. For a recreation example, SRPs may have different threshold numbers (e.g., tightening threshold for requiring an SRP from 25 individuals to 15).

--Zeb: Asks for clarification on a rumor that five grazing permits would be closed.

- Michael: Discusses how the alternatives were developed for grazing. Under Alternative A, areas currently unavailable for grazing remain unavailable. The range of alternatives addresses protection of objects in regard to grazing through different approaches and different proposed closures. The DEIS includes a range of different alternatives that protect objects; the Proposed RMP/Final EIS will have one decision. It is necessary for the agencies to hear feedback regarding the range of alternatives to be able to make an informed decision for the Proposed RMP/Final EIS. Recreation and grazing are hot-button topics but there should not be fear in analysis; because something is presented for analysis, does not necessarily mean it will be the final product. As the draft plan is released, Michael invites Zeb to have a one-on-one conversation regarding the range of alternatives.

-Jared: The original intent of this meeting was to have the DEIS out for public comment and to be able to have an in-depth conversation about the range of alternative, but we are now hoping to have those conversations in January.

-Michael: Some USFS permittees have been reached out to get a sense of what the effects are of proposed closures and to schedule meetings shortly after the release of the plan to discuss the range of alternatives and to receive direct feedback on how that will affect their operations. Michael further explains how different approaches can be taken to propose allotments as unavailable to grazing such as proximity to cultural resources, direct or indirect approaches.

Preferred Alternative:

Jared Lundell: Discussed the preferred alternative slide and explains how this process has taken a little longer than expected to ensure a full range of alternatives is developed. The next stage of the process is public comment, emphasizing that no decisions have been made at this time. Discussion with cooperating agencies have occurred and agencies have been working closely with them and the BEC to develop the range of alternatives. The preferred alternative will be a large part of the public comment draft. Part of the BLM planning rules is that there will be an agency preferred alternative but that does not constitute a decision or a need to choose that alternative as a part of the decision. A preferred alternative is limited to one alternative but the proposed RMP/final EIS can be a combination of alternatives. It is important for the agencies to receive public comment on the management alternatives for the agencies to understand how the public uses the landscape and the impacts of the proposed management. The preferred alternative is a starting point and how the agencies currently feel management actions meet the purpose and need, including protection of monument objects.

-Michael: Emphasizes that the preferred alternative is a starting point with the public and indicates a starting point for conversation and public input. It is important to note that it is one full alternative. The agencies must look at one full alternative to see where to best start these conversations. It is important for people to keep in mind the difference between the preferred alternative and proposed RMP/final EIS and that the preferred alternative is not an amalgamation of management. The agencies want to start the conversation of how to manage the monument to best protect objects and the preferred alternative is how the agencies see how to best start those conversations.

11:15 am – Discussion of planning efforts, public engagement and next steps

Jared Lundell: The next step in the planning process is to hold a 90 day public comment period from November through February. The next MAC meeting will be held during the public comment period. The preferred way for members of the public to submit public comments is submitting via ePlanning. Comments can also be mailed to the Monticello BLM office. Comments can also be submitted at public meetings either verbally or in writing. Asks if there are any questions on how to submit comments.

---Denyce: The term monument objects keeps being used by the agencies. What does the term “protecting monument objects” means?

- Jared: The proclamations are what describes the objects. The term object comes from the Antiquities Act. The objects identified in the proclamations are what are being looked at to protect under the Antiquities Act. Objects are anything from cultural resources, springs, rocks, birds, wildlife, plants, and traditional uses. The proclamations also mentions two uses that are prominent in the monument: grazing and recreation. These are identified as uses and not objects in Proclamation 10285.
- Michael: The proclamation denotes what a manager needs to manage for. Uses are mentioned in the Proclamation and the agencies need to acknowledge the importance of those in managing the monument. Managers are to consider public involvement in how to manage these and it is critical to listen to those comments in deciding how to management the monument. Managers must also consider the expertise of the BEC. Management is done in collaboration with the BEC, and at the advice of the MAC and public/community involvement.

--Eve: Can the role of the cooperating agencies be explained in the scheme of working with the tribes, MAC and public?

- Jared: Cooperating Agency engagement is a requirement of NEPA. Cooperating Agencies and are made up of tribal, local and state government. There have been meetings throughout the planning process including during the development of the alternatives.
- Michael: The MOUs that are in place with the Cooperating Agencies allow them to see the alternatives and preferred alternative prior to the public and engage in discussion and gather input. They play a critical role in developing and shaping aspects of the plan.

--Eve: Asks if information received form the MAC is integrated into those meetings.

- Jared: Yes, this information is included in those meetings and there have been discussions regarding MAC.
- Mark: Explains how they (PLPCO) have been involved and that being a Cooperating Agency is a good opportunity to represent the State's perspective. Mark notes he would like to see tribal representatives present at the Cooperating Agency meetings and see's opportunity for some discussions to happen concurrently.

--Eve: Will there be an opportunity for the MAC to see where the Cooperating Agencies stand in regard to the aspects of the plan.

- Jared: Explains the MOUs and how the Cooperating Agencies are required to remain confidential until the plan is released to the public. Notes this could be a discussion point at the next MAC.
- Michael: The full position of the Cooperating Agencies would come through their comments. The agencies will look for opportunities to inform the MAC of comments received from the Cooperating Agencies.

--Dencyce: What has the input been from indigenous or tribal nations on the plan? There needs to be clarification on the influence of the BEC, MAC and Cooperating Agencies in the plan.

- Jared: The BEC, made up of five Tribal Nations (Hopi, Navajo, Ute Indian Tribe, Ute Mountain Ute, and Zuni), plays a large role in the process. The agencies work very closely with the BEC and meet regularly, including frequent in-person meetings. They are very heavily involved in the planning process and have also seen the alternatives. This also goes back to the government-to-government relationships and that they are also in the privileged state to see some of the plan information prior to the public. The agencies have separately and jointly been fulfilling government-to-government consultation duties. This information will also be outlined in the DEIS. The role of the MAC will also be discussed in the plan. The section 106 process includes consulting and tribal meetings as part of the NHPA.
- Michael: Consultation was further engaged as a process in the USFS plan revision.

--A public comment was submitted through Q&A. The MAC members discussed this comment seemed like something to discuss during the comment period and not at this time.

12:00 Lunch

1:15 pm – Public Comment

Public Comment Period Logistics:

Pre-registered attendees will be called on in the order they registered.

---Tim Peterson: Expresses appreciation for the members of the MAC and agency staff for being here today and the importance of this work for BENM. Thanks the agencies for the opportunity to participate in the field trip in June. Comments, usually there is substantive material to respond to in these meetings but today has been topics that have already been covered. I would like to see the agency come to these meetings with action items for the MAC. Don't be afraid to postpone a meeting for the MAC.

---Jesse W was registered for a public comment but was not online at the time of public comment.

---Chantel Martin: Comment submitted through Q&A and read by Emilee Helton: I'm interested to know what specific efforts the MAC has made and will continue to make to seek input from the native and indigenous people who best understand and respect the cultural importance of Bears Ears? If the primary goal of the management plan is to protect cultural objects and resources, you should seek the wisdom and suggestions of the people who have managed it since time immemorial.

-Jared: Asks if there are any other online attendees that would like to give a comment. Also asks the MAC if they have responses to comments.

- Lee: Agrees with first commenter in that it would be helpful to have substantive material to talk about at the MAC meetings.
- Louis has a response to the comment regarding indigenous perspective: This is a process that is unraveling and is being molded together. For Louis, as an indigenous Dine, who has roots back on the Navajo Nation, and as a guide on the BENM landscape, has the opportunity to go home every day and seek thoughts and input from his elders. BENM is home to a lot of Tribes. As Dine, he fortunately has neighbors such as Ute and Hopi. It's an ongoing effort and he is very fortunate to be on the MAC and is learning about the involvement of the Tribes. People of the Tribes are interested and a lot of voices are being heard. We are also fortunate to have the BEC, as they have their team. Louis is out in the field a lot and talks to the elders that hold the knowledge and this planning effort is an effort that they are learning as well. Nobody has the answers right now. Louis has clans in Arizona and New Mexico, so has perspectives and can go home and ask what is special about the monument to them. Some of them don't know this landscape is a monument but they know about the Bears Ears. There are a lot of voices that are being heard, and Louis is bringing more voices to the table. There are many people back at Louis' home that will be interested about the BENM. It's an exciting time when different voices from different Tribes, and uses, are being heard. Louis has family that are cattle ranchers and their voices will also be heard.

---There are no other comments. The meeting is continuing on with the agenda unless someone online has a comment.

2:15 pm – Continued discussion of planning efforts

-Agencies provide information on the public comment period and public meeting. Jared encourages MAC members to encourage constituents to attend public meetings.

Discussion on substantive comments:

Jared Lundell: As part of the public comment period, the agencies are looking for issues that may have been missed in the analysis, information about potential impacts from the alternatives, or information on the development of alternatives. Additionally, comments on

specific management actions or some of the issues/impacts you see as a result of that management, would be a good comment. If there is something of importance that the Agencies should be looking to protect would be good comments to provide, or if there is an alternative or specific action under an alternative to highlight, will help the agencies move towards the proposed plan. Jared reiterates that this is a draft plan and it is a good time for the public to bring anything of issue to agency attention. General opinions without rationale are generally not helpful. Comments that are in favor or against an action without reason are not substantive.

From the BLM NEPA Handbook:

Substantive comments do one or more of the following:

- question, with reasonable basis, the accuracy of information in the EIS or EA.
- question, with reasonable basis, the adequacy of, methodology for, or assumptions used for the environmental analysis.
- present new information relevant to the analysis.
- present reasonable alternatives other than those analyzed in the EIS or EA.
- cause changes or revisions in one or more of the alternatives.

Comments that are not considered substantive include the following.

- comments in favor of or against the proposed action or alternatives without reasoning that meet the criteria listed above (such as “we disagree with Alternative Two and believe the BLM should select Alternative Three”).
- comments that only agree or disagree with BLM policy or resource decisions without justification or supporting data that meet the criteria listed above (such as “more grazing should be permitted”).
- comments that don’t pertain to the project area or the project (such as “the government should eliminate all dams,” when the project is about a grazing permit).
- comments that take the form of vague, open-ended questions.

-**Michael Engelhart:** Adds that the agencies don’t want to set a threshold for public comments that aren’t able to be taken into consideration. All comments are educational and represent the public. There is a bar for substantive comments, but it is not set so high that comments do not provide input to management.

-Jared: Discusses public meeting dates that are subject to change. Public meetings are primarily scheduled between late December and January. Virtual meetings will be staggered to try and catch different attendees. Times and venues have not been nailed down yet.

--Lee: Asks if information on the public meetings will be provided as it firms up.

- Jared: Responds that emails will be sent to the MAC regarding this information so information can be communicated with constituents.

--Eve: Is there a threshold for how many people it takes to hold a public meeting? If enough people in Moab are interested in a public meeting, could one be offered there?

- Jared: There is not firm guidance on where to have meetings. The intent is to have meetings in locations that cover a broad region and communities.
- Michael: Meetings are sometimes requested by local government that may serve a similar purpose, such as county or city council meetings.
- Jared: The MAC meeting will also be held during this time and we could think about holding that meeting in Moab.

Louis: Asks if there is a document showing comments that have been provided.

- Jared: Explains there is a scoping report on the ePlanning website that compiles comments received during the public scoping period. A report will be developed by the

contractor after the public comment period that identifies substantive comments and how they have been responded to.

-Michael: The meetings will be held in a town hall format most likely to offer stations for attendees to ask questions and gather additional information.

EPlanning Tutorial:

Jared Lundell: Explains how to submit comments on ePlanning.

-Jake: Asks the MAC members what the best way to reach out to community members is and if there is one way that works better than others.

- Lee: States the open houses that the USFS used in their plan revision were helpful. The maps were helpful to help orient themselves. Important management actions, such as recreation zones, would be helpful to have on maps. Noted there are many people in the four corners region where internet connectivity is an issue, so working with governments on a local level that is not dependent on technology would be helpful.
- Jared: Discusses how the agencies have been working on getting information to some of the more remote areas and those communities where internet connectivity is a challenge.
- Lee: Explains how differences in age presents a problem with targeted outreach and may how there is a potential to miss different age groups.
- Sean: Says flyers could be helpful. In Blanding, information is often viewed on social media.
- Lee: Suggests putting information in branch libraries on their public bulletin board. Translated information could be helpful to certain Tribal groups.
- Jared: Agencies are discussing how to reach out to communities and have been talking about having translators at meetings. The BLM will have social media posts that can be shared as well.
- Eve: Suggests hard copies of the documents be available at the libraries. Helpful to have notifications sent to the newspapers and to send the press release to the MAC members.
- Michael: An interactive map will be provided on ePlanning which will be helpful for the public to see different resources and alternatives. Suggests that we could have a station at the public meetings to show the interactive map.
- Jared: Discusses how the agencies are thinking about having a larger scale map that shows the four corners region. Agencies are also working on developing a fact sheet that will be provided to the MAC that includes basic information such as how to leave a public comment.
- Dallin: Provides a written comment in the chat saying the San Juan Record and social media would be helpful to advertise in.
- Louis: Suggests advertising on the radio as that would be a way to reach individuals on the Navajo Nation and Hopi.

--Angelo: How does the pending government shutdown affect the public meeting schedule and is there is a contingency plan?

- Jared: Responds that a government shutdown is in the back of our minds. If a shutdown does happen, the agencies hope that these meetings are far enough out that they wouldn't be affected. If they are affected, the public meetings would be adjusted. If a government shutdown does occur, the ePlanning website would still be available,

however the agencies understand the importance of engaging with the public during the comment period.

- Michael: Usually Jake and Michael would remain working and navigate what a shutdown would look like for the planning process. Bottom line it would be a disruption.

--Mark: Notes open house style is good for meetings, but many people don't know how to participate. Much of the public doesn't know what they don't know, or how the information impacts them. Recommends having a way to better communicate the proposed changes or ideas to the public. There are language barriers but also communication barriers for those folks. Encourage the meetings to provide as much engagement as possible to help translate how this will look on the landscape and how it would impact communities, uses, access.

- Jared: Agencies have discussed doing small Q&A groups. Agencies will also do a presentation at the beginning of the public meeting. Discussion of this presentation could be a topic of the next meeting, including general topics such as, "What is Bears Ears", "How can you participate". The virtual public meetings can also be very helpful to answer questions individuals have as they are usually held in a Q&A format.
- Lee: There has been a considerable effort to reach out to Indigenous people and governments but we often overlook the Hispanic communities. There are similar language barriers with Native American communities as with Hispanic communities.
- Jared: Suggests looking into reaching some of those communities with social media.
- Denyce: Suggests adding QR codes to social media posts that can be shared easily. Has there been an increase in indigenous voices over the past few months in regard to public comment periods?
- Jared clarifies there has not been recent public comment periods but agencies has been working with BEC on how to best reach some of those communities.
- Denyce: Touches on capacity of indigenous communities and government.
- Jared: Agencies are working with the BEC on ways the virtual meetings could be presented in person at chapter houses to further reach people and get them involved.
- Louis: Asks if the Agencies have talked about creating a commercial about the plan to provide information in a different way.
- Jared: There is a BLM YouTube channel. Agencies could consider putting a short video together.
- Jake: The virtual meetings will be recorded and available on the ePlanning website.

-Jake: Suggests another call for public comments. Benjamin raised his hand to provide comment.

--Benjamin Bellorado: On the advisory committee, are there archaeologist's, as well as indigenous peoples? A few years ago there was going to be some more people voted on. Can you all comment on the status of the committee?

- Jared: Asks the MAC if we could provide information on this. MAC members agree. Jared explains a previous round of nominations were completed and Lee Bennet represent archaeology. Lewis was recently selected to represent indigenous communities. Shawn Ivins was selected to represent grazing. There is a current call for nominations for public at large, paleontology, and private land owner.
- Emilee asks if anyone else would like to make a public comment. There were no additional commenters. Public comment period ended.

3:45 pm – Action Items/Input on next meeting time, date, and agenda

Jared Lundell: Discusses next steps and the original intent for this meeting which was to go over the content of the DEIS. That information will be provided at the next MAC meeting, tentatively scheduled for January 8.

--Shawn: Asks when the public comment period will end.

- Jared: The comment period will end in February, or 90 days after it is released to the public. The MAC will hopefully have a little over a month to review the plan and work with constituents on input or concerns that can be discussed at the next MAC meeting. Agencies are working on a Federal Register Notice, which is a requirement for having a meeting. Jared asks if January would be a no-go for any folks and for folks to look at calendars.
- Shawn: Asks if shifting the date to later would impact the members whose terms are ending.
- Jared: Yes.
- Sean: Says we should aim for January 8.

--Zeb: Suggests to nominate a chair and vice chair.

--Eve: January 8 works

- Emilee counts that there are ten MAC members in attendance for a quorum.
- Jared: Asks if anyone would like to nominate anyone or themselves.
- Zeb: Nominates Shawn.
- Jared: Is Shawn willing to serve?
- Sean: Notes he is willing.
- Eve: Asks for clarification if Shawn accepted nomination.
- Davina: Nominates Angelo for chair.
- Jared: Asks if Angelo or Denyce have interest in being chair.
- Angelo: Asks how long he has to think about his nomination.
- Emilee reads comment that Denyce seconds Angelo's nomination for chair.
- Eve: Asks if Denyce is interested in chair or vice chair.
- Denyce: Says she is interested in vice chair.
- Rachel: Asks if nominees would like to speak to why they should be in the role. And then a vote can be held either by raise of hand or verbal.
- Shawn: Would do it out of responsibility and to help the committee with their roles and to be as efficient as possible as that is what he was called on to do.
- Angelo: It's important for MAC to be practicable, efficient, and direct to get to the heart of the matter and to get started on that as soon as possible so there is something in place in advance of the changes to come.
- Jared suggests a vote:

Votes:

- Angelo: 4 Y, 5 N
- Shawn: 4 Y, 5 N

-There is not a majority. Jared suggests additional discussion between members. Rachel suggests a break for members to think about nominations and votes.

Break

- Zeb: Nominates Angelo as chair and Shawn as vice chair.
- Mark seconds the nomination.

Zeb – Y

Denyce - Y

Davina - Y

Mark - Y

Angelo - Y

Eve - Y

Sean - Y

Lee - Y

Lewis - Y

Dallin - Y

Angelo will be chair and Sean will be vice-chair.

-Jared: Asks for any go-backs.

- Angelo: Reiterates that the biggest concern is what will happen in the event of a shutdown.
- Jared: Says he will make sure information gets to the MAC depending on the outcome.

-Angelo motions to adjourn.

- Everyone in favor.

Meeting ends at 2:58

3 pm – Adjourn

Notes finalized: Meeting notes were finalized on January 12, 2024, following an opportunity for Bears Ears Monument Advisory Committee review. No notes or edits were received.