

Notes
Western Oregon Resource Advisory Council Meeting and Field Trip
Coos Bay District
July 10, 2024

Council Members Present: Mike DeBlasi, Sue Martino, Robin Harkins, Randy Smith, Tasha Davison, Samara Phelps, Dino Venti, Dylan Edward, Sarah Rockwell, Sophia Kaelke, Mike Kennedy, Bekcy Wolf

BLM Staff Present: Joe Aragon, Steve Lydick, Heather Whitman, Denise McInturff, David Ballenger, John Harper, Matt Bailey, Ryan Kay, Kyle Sullivan, Charity Glade, Sam Dales, Aaron Curtis, Valerie Lenhartzen, Megan Harper

Meeting called to order at 8:32 a.m.

Introductions and Welcome

Steve Lydick introduced the Coos Bay District.

Heather Whitman, Designated Federal Official, welcomed the RAC members and expressed appreciation for their time and commitment. Welcome to our newest members: Mike DeBlasi, Robin Harkins, and Becky Wolf.

Secure Rural Schools and Title II Program Update

- SRS is a unique authority for the RAC in Western Oregon.
- SRS has not yet been reauthorized. 2024 is the last year of funding on the current legislation.
- Aaron Curtis in the new OR/WA BLM Title II coordinator.
- The BLM received 58 applications in the last round of requests for Title II applications.
- There is \$6.6 million in project requests, and \$2.6 million in Title II funding to distribute. The \$2.6 million includes \$2.2 million in new funds and \$350,000 in funding remaining from previous grant cycles.
- Coos and Columbia Counties did not elect into the SRS program this year; therefore there is not Title II funds in those counties this round.
- Funding can rollover into subsequent fiscal years until the legislation expires. The funding stays associated with the county it came from.
- The RAC members asked in there is any guidance on reviewing the projects, and yes, the BLM will help provide guidance to the RAC members.
- The RAC members requested information on if projects are asking for a second year of funding or if they are a multi-year project.

District Updates

Coos Bay

- Loon Lake Storm Damage – there is no potable water at the site, but campgrounds are back at full operations.
- Timber target this year is 31 mmbf, with 12 ASQ.

- Baker Quarry jetty rock will be offered this year. It will provide jetty rock to a number of jetties that are in the process of being repaired.
- Aquatic restoration program on District continues to be robust thanks in part to the funding the RAC has allocated to projects over the years.
- Unique funding opportunities for recreation sites and restoration
- What is your number one challenge?
- The timber program is the most controversial.
 - Getting people to want to be in public service is the biggest challenge. Are you seeing a path between youth corps and federal positions? Yes!
 - Have you placed cameras in areas of dumping? Yes. Unfortunately, new areas are always found.
 - Does the agency have a mentoring program? Yes, it still exists. The biggest challenge with hiring is housing costs.

Lakeview

- The BLM Director is in Oregon today.
- Trying to fill the Klamath Falls Field Manager position.
- Finished the SW Oregon Resource Management Plan

Medford

- Salt Creek Fire is active. Elizabeth Burghard is serving as an Agency Administrator for the fire, which is why she couldn't join us today.
- Roseburg and Medford Districts signed a co-stewardship agreement with the Cow Creek Tribe. They are currently working on a fire stewardship project on Roseburg District.

NW Oregon

- Restoring sites after 2020 fires, including reopening Fisherman's Bend Day Use Area. Timber Salvage completed at Canyon Creek. Preliminary designs for several sites should be done this fall.
- Hult Dam FEIS will be out the end of July 2024.
- Sierra Pacific Industries was the successful bidder for the King Condon Timber Sale.
- Replacing the boardwalk at West Eugene Wetlands.
- Clearing roadways after Jan. 2024 ice storm.
- Small fires so far this fire season. Fuels are still wet enough not to carry fire.
- Look to the RAC to expand conversations on timber sales and forest resilience.

Roseburg

- Completing restoration projects after 2020 Archie Creek Fire in the Rock Creek and Canton Creek areas. Burned 10% of Roseburg District lands. Good opportunities for field trips.
- Public scoping for recreation sites EA soon. Plan to have an EA out for public review in the fall.
- North Bank habitat management area restoration work and prescribed burning to do some weed treatments on-going
- EA for ASQ in the works, will be out for public comment in two weeks.

- Fire risk reduction project with the state, local, and BLM partners. Provide protection to communities, vital infrastructure, and resources.
- Mediation with Pacific Corps on fire damage to hopefully reach settlement and have funding for restoration efforts.

Questions and Feedback from the RAC Members

- In Clackamas County, the Forest Service collaborated and had listening sessions to learn about feedback for recreation sites. Consider doing this in Roseburg and NW Oregon. In Roseburg, have been working with Glide Revitalization.
- Are BLM funds redirected away from other programs? No.
- How much of BLM land base is for sustained yield harvesting and how much is in late successional reserve? 1/3 in ASQ, and 2/3 non-ASQ.
- It would be great for the BLM to make posters about public comment periods. Add social media component. Let Title II applicants know about public comment periods for comments.

Field Trip to Loon Lake

- The group stopped at Loon Lake and heard a presentation from David Ballenger and John Harper on the BLM OR/WA Recreation program and management of the Loon Lake Recreation Site.

Field Trip to Soup Creek/Ash Valley Timber Sales

- The group stopped at two forested stands to learn about BLM efforts to thin dense stands to create older forest structure.

Field trip and meeting adjourned at 3:30 pm.