

Mojave-Southern Great Basin Resource Advisory Council Meeting  
BLM Southern Nevada District Office, Las Vegas, NV or Virtual/Zoom  
Aug 14-15, 2024

Agenda

1:00 p.m. - Opening

Call to order

Welcome from BLM Southern Nevada District Manager and Designated Federal Official

Meeting protocol/introductions

Zoom logistics

1:30 p.m. - Orientation

Overview of role of Resource Advisory Councils

Ethics

Logistics for travel reimbursement

3:00 p.m. - Break

3:15 p.m. - District Overviews

Battle Mountain District

Ely District

Southern Nevada District

5:00 p.m. - Adjourn

	14-Aug	
Greg Anderson		
Steve Leslie	BLM Las Vegas Field Office, Assistant Field Manager, Division of Resources	In-person
Bruce Sillitoe	BLM Las Vegas Field Office, Field Manager	In-person
Zach Reichold	BLM Southern Nevada District, acting Deputy District Manager	In-person
Catrina Williams	BLM Red Rock/Sloan Field Office, Field Manager	In-person
Kirsten Canon	BLM Southern Nevada District Public Affairs, RAC Coordinator	In-person
Randy Martin	BLM Battle Mountain District Manager Public Affairs	Virtual
Theresa Coleman	BLM Southern Nevada District Manager and Designated Federal Official	In-person
Robbie McAboy	BLM Ely District Manager	In-person
Perry Wickham	BLM Battle Mountain District Manager (Detail)	In-person
Stephanie Garcia-Vause	RAC Member Category 1, Transportation and ROW	In-person and Virtual
Susan Agee	RAC Member Category 1 Grazing and Ranching	Virtual
Kimberly Reinhart	RAC Member Category 1 Grazing and Ranching	In-person
Tara Kilpatrick	RAC Member Category 2 WHB	In-person
David Spicer	RAC Member Category 2 Dispersed Recreation	In-person
John Hiatt	RAC Member Category 2 Environmental Organization	In-person
Matthew Brown	RAC Member Category 2 Environmental Organization	In-person
Gary McCuin	RAC Member Category 3 Elected Official	Virtual
Shanandoah Anderson	RAC Member Category 3 Native American	In-person
Jef Jaeger	RAC Member Category 3 Academia	In-person
Megan Labadie	RAC Member Category 3 State Agency Rep	Virtual

Opening

- Theresa Coleman, as Southern Nevada District Manager and Designated Federal Official extended a welcome from BLM to attendees. She reviewed safety considerations for the venue. She said that it was the first meeting in a while, and BLM is happy to have good attendance.

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- Each attendee (in-person and virtual) introduced him/herself by name and title with a brief background as appropriate.
- Kirsten Cannon, RAC Coordinator and Southern Nevada District Public Affairs Specialist encouraged participants to speak loudly so that virtual attendees could hear and fully engage in the discussion.

Orientation

- Overview of role of Resource Advisory Councils, BLM Presenter, Rita Henderson, NVSO Public Affairs Specialist (participating virtually) briefed.
- RACs are very important to the Department of Interior and the department manages 85 advisory committees across the country. RACs are integral to advancing BLM's key priorities and carrying out its mission across the nation. So, thank you so much for your perseverance and sticking with it on this Mojave, Southern Great Basin RAC.
- The Federal Advisory Committee Act was enacted in 1972 and that provided an opportunity for members of the public to participate in meetings between federal agencies and groups that the agency either established or managed for the purpose of giving and receiving advice and recommendations regarding the agency's activities.
- Reviewing materials in advance of meetings is important. By doing so, you can engage and ask meaningful questions and share concerns with other group members and committee members.
- RAC members should be willing to engage in an exchange of views and perspectives because having all those different perspectives makes better conversation and provides more thoughtful advice. Between these meetings BLM encourages everyone to continue working on their individual committee assignments and be prepared for the next meeting.
- Comply with all the applicable ethics and government laws which including those related to conflict of interest and financial reporting.
- Be cooperative with the committee's Designated Federal Official regarding the rules for participating in meetings. Members are encouraged to serve on the committee for their appointed term or if they find they can't serve, resign. BLM hopes RAC members don't have to resign. Members should refrain from publicly presenting their individual views as those of the committee.
- The RAC should complete required administrative tasks within the timeframe set by the DFO. That all helps the RAC coordinator because she's the backbone a lot of times with administrative things.
- Appointments to RAC are typically for three years.

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- Each committee must have a DFO, a designated federal official to manage the committee and attend every committee and sub-Committee meeting. Committee meetings can't be conducted without a DFO. Committee meetings must be announced in advance and open to the public. The public will be provided the opportunity to provide comments in writing or orally to the committee.
- Any reasonable accommodation requests from committee members will be allowed. This applies to all committee documents including reports, transcripts, etc.
- These are public meetings and records must be made available for public inspection and copying. All committee documents are agency records. Members of the committee should be balanced in terms of points of view. Lastly committees cannot meet or take any action without a valid charter. Charters are renewed on a biennial basis unless specified, through legislation.

### Ethics

- BLM Presenter, Terri Buck, Assistant Ethics Counselor for BLM (Virtual). Ms. Buck explained that the material she was going to provide was specifically aimed at persons involved in an official role for the federal government.
- Generally, she described when and how a RAC member should recuse him or herself from committee discussions, the concept of predictable effect, direct and indirect financial interest (regardless of amount), and immediate or future benefit.
- During the brief, members posed the hypothetical question to gauge whether a recusal was necessary in terms of general categories. For example, a RAC member may have knowledge of off-road traffic, grazing and rights of way. Would that RAC member be required to recuse him or herself generally if a case could be made that they could benefit generally? The concern was that the committee would be denied a recused person with expertise. Within the framework of her briefing, Ms. Buck explained that, “no” they don't have to recuse themselves from the broad discussion about the development of those types of things. If there was a financial or predictable effect to their own ‘group,’ - only then would we consider it a conflict of interest.
- Ms. Buck generally covered the following:
  - Individuals appointed to serve as members of advisory committees may come from both the public and private sectors. These individuals provide the Government with needed expertise, advice, and diverse views. Some members may be regular Government employees who are appointed in their official capacity to represent their government entity, when called for in the committee’s charter. Others may be appointed to serve as special Government employees, i.e., an officer or employee who is retained, designated, appointed, or employed by the Government to perform temporary duties, with or without compensation, for not more than 130 days during any period of 365 consecutive days. Others, may be appointed as representatives.

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- As a representative, RAC members do not have any Government employee status. They have been specifically appointed to provide the committee with the point of view of a non-Federal entity or of a recognizable group of persons (e.g., an industry sector, labor unions, environmental groups, etc.) that has interests in the subject matter under the committee's charge. Unlike employee members, members are not appointed to exercise judgment on behalf of the government. Instead, they serve as the voice of a group, organization, or entity with a financial interest or other stake in a matter before the advisory committee.
  
- Representatives are not treated the same as Government employees for purposes of applying Federal ethics rules. Regular and special Government employees are expected to provide their own independent judgment in committee deliberations, and they are expected to discuss and deliberate in a manner that is free from conflicts of interest. Consequently, they must comply with applicable conflict of interest laws, standards of conduct rules, and financial disclosure requirements. In contrast, Federal ethics rules do not apply to RAC members as a representative. However, to ensure that every citizen can have complete confidence in the integrity of the advisory committee process, the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) addresses potential conflicts of interest of its advisory committee representatives through the inclusion of certain ethics responsibilities in the committee charter. Following is a discussion of the ethics responsibilities language contained in your advisory committee's charter and how it applies to them.
  1. Members are prohibited from participating in a specific party matter only if the matter will have a direct and predictable effect on their direct financial interest or the direct financial interest of the entity you represent.
  2. A specific party matter will have a direct effect on a financial interest if there is a close causal link between any decision or action to be taken in the matter and any expected effect of the matter on the financial interest. An effect may be direct even though it does not occur immediately. A specific party matter will not have a direct effect on a financial interest, however, if the chain of causation is attenuated or is contingent upon the occurrence of events that are speculative or that are independent of, and unrelated to, the matter. A specific party matter that influences a financial interest only as a consequence of its effects on the general economy does not have a direct effect within the meaning of this provision.
  3. A specific party matter will have a predictable effect on a financial interest if there is a real, as opposed to a speculative, possibility that the matter will affect the financial interest. It is not necessary, however, that

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the magnitude of the gain or loss be known, and the dollar amount of the gain or loss is immaterial.

- Ms. Buck facilitated a discussion with scenarios requiring RAC Meeting attendees to decide whether a hypothetical person was or was not abiding by ethical standards. In summary, they are prohibited from participating, as part of their advisory duties, in any committee action regarding a specific party matter with the DOI in which they have, or the entity you represent has, a direct financial interest. If you find yourself in a position to take any advisory action regarding a specific party matter with the Department that would affect their direct financial interest or the direct financial interest of the entity they represent, they must notify the Designated Federal Official and recuse him/herself from participating in that action. If they are unsure whether or not recusal is necessary, or have any other questions regarding your ethics responsibilities, they should notify the Designated Federal Official and contact the Departmental Ethics Office at (202) 208-7960 or DOI\_Ethics@sol.doi.gov with any questions about the ethics requirements for representative members appointed to DOI advisory committees.

Logistics for travel reimbursement

- BLM Presenter, Christina Hinton. Reimbursement procedures were reviewed. Attendees are required to stay within Per Diem rates for Las Vegas, NV. If a rental car is authorized, the government will only allow compact vehicles unless otherwise justified and authorized in advance. Allowances for meals and incidental expenses were explained. Hotel cannot be over \$120/night.

District Overviews

- In sequence, each District Manager (Battle Mountain District's Perry Wickham, Ely District's Robbie McAboy, and Southern Nevada District's, Theresa Coleman) provided a contemporary overview briefing of their respective districts which highlighted the district's mission, civic and tribal stakeholders, location, responsibility, manning, equities, and challenges. The Battle Mountain and Ely presentations reflected rural themes while the Southern Nevada District briefing had more urban elements given its relationship to, and influence by Nevada's largest cities. The Ely District Manager included a detailed update on projects. The Southern Nevada District Manager featured a video with BLM employees providing expressing personal stories about their role. Each presenter took questions from attendees in-person and virtually. Answers were conversational and candid.
- Meeting adjourned

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Agenda

- 9:00 a.m. - Opening
  - Call to order.
  - Welcome from BLM Southern Nevada District Manager and Designated Federal Official
  - Meeting protocol/introductions
  - Zoom logistics.
- 9:30 a.m. Proposed Feedback Areas Based on District Overviews
  - Battle Mountain District
  - Ely District
  - Southern Nevada District
- 10:00 a.m. - Election of Officers
- 10:30 a.m. - Break
- 10:45 a.m. - RAC Discussion Items
  - Discussion to set next RAC meeting dates.
  - RAC Members' questions of BLM staff
  - RAC Members can introduce topics for discussion
- 12:30 p.m. - Public Comment
  - Speakers will be called in sign-in order.
  - Written comments accepted before or during meeting
- 1:00 pm Adjourn.
  - Closing Remarks

	15-Aug	
Juan Palma		
Ray Tsui	BLM Southern Nevada District, Assistant District Manager, Division of Su	In-person
Nicholas Pay	BLM Pahrump Field Office, Field Manager	In-person
Steve Leslie	BLM Las Vegas Field Office, Assistant Field Manager, Division of Resour	In-person
Bruce Sillitoe	BLM Las Vegas Field Office, Field Manager	In-person
Catrina Williams	BLM Red Rock/Sloan Field Office, Field Manager	In-person
Kirsten Canon	BLM Southern Nevada Distric Public Affairs	In-person
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Opening

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- Call to order with a quorum. Welcome from BLM Southern Nevada District Manager and Designated Federal Official, Theresa Coleman.
- Meeting protocol/introductions and Zoom logistics were reviewed.

Proposed Feedback Areas Based on District Overviews

- Battle Mountain District Manager, Perry Wickham opened with a list of several questions to solicit feedback from in-person and virtual attendees. Those questions included:
  1. What can BLM do to improve public perception of the agency?
  2. Strategically, what can we do to recruit future employees, stewards of public lands and resources?
  3. What stops BLM from operating in the best way possible concerning our permitting process for recreational use, grazing, mining?
  4. How can we do a better job recruiting help for our casual hire program (wildland fires)?
  5. What can we do to prevent vandalism on public lands?
  6. What can we do to improve habitats for horses and wild burros?
- What followed was an open discussion of this list of topics. Here excerpts of the dialogue that followed:
- The public knows very little about BLM. It's going to take significant leadership to change that. And this goes beyond just the local people and starts at the very top in Washington.
- One of the basic sayings in politics is that if you must explain yourself, you're already losing. So, it's important when dealing with the public to clearly explain what's happening and be very open. If that happens, you will do a better job. Here in Southern Nevada, probably the least known person is the District Director, and it should not be that way. The person managing most of the land area in Clark County should be one of the better-known people and be out there communicating what they're trying to do and not be just totally reactive.
- To improve public perception of the agency, BLM needs to show more transparency. Have more face-to-face contact with public. BLM should consider doing tours on the ranches. What's needed between permittees and the agencies is good communication and that seems to have been quashed in the last 10 years. Strategically recruit more future employees. Work stronger with the Society for Range Management. There's been a lot of folks come from there. Work with Nevada range camp. We're getting kids from all over, the state, urban and rural. And getting them interested in natural resources and it's a great place if BLM folks/recruiters are there and BLM has been in the past.
- To improve habitats for horses and wild, get to AML. Districts are stuck between a rock and a hard place with funding from Congress. It's Congress's fault in the end for where we're at, but this (over AML) is a cancer that's going to keep growing on us and we must

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get to AML. Then we can start improving habitat. There are several white sage flats that are being converted to weeds and other things and that to me is criminal.

- So, it's kind of hard as livestock producers to hear the BLM tell us, well, you got to do this and you got to do that and you need to protect the range, etc. But BLM is not doing their part.
- It does feel like there is sort of a revolving door of employees at certain field offices and you know just when you get a real good working relationship with somebody then they're out the door and onto the next thing. So (retaining employees) would go towards keeping good working relationship.
- RAC members advocated for “outside the box thinking,” reorganization, modifying job descriptions and so forth. Consensus was that most people in the United States have no interaction with the federal government.
- The RAC expressed that the public rails against the BLM, but BLM people are just the ones in the middle. It's Congress that's making rules. It's Congress that refuses to appropriate money to do things being proposed for the wild horse and burro program which is hugely underfunded. Most Congress people in the United States don't have any burros in their district so it's not their problem. So, they have no interest in solving the problem. And it's always easiest to not appropriate money rather than explain what the budget went to.
- Job satisfaction in BLM needs to be important. Employees shouldn't be or feel like they are “paper pushers.” Allow the range managers to be out, on the ground, doing what they need to do and overseeing.
- The NEPA process is important but is there a way to streamline it? Is BLM Nevada optimizing its cooperation with the state when it comes to WHB? As a group we (the RAC) are not likely to solve all the problems. We can make suggestions. So, the question becomes, what can this group recommend?
- Nevada land needs to be respected. It is just as unique ecologically and in some cases more so than other areas with forests and we need to protect the plants and animals in this whole system. Unfortunately, Las Vegas may be one of the worst places in the country for people throwing out trash. Nevada isn't just a wasteland, and we must protect it And so a promotion of the land, could be one of the most important things that BLM can do. BLM can get children on board, then they also get their parents on board. We do that with recycling.

#### Election of Officers

- DFO and Southern Nevada District Directo Theresa Coleman presided.

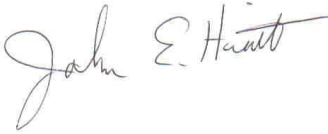


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- Ms. Coleman said, I believe how this works is that we're now going to go into electing officers and you all as the resource advisory council can decide what issues from what you heard and other things you may consider, you would like to work on for the year. And what we're encouraging is to work on those items. Where we can't accomplish an action or create a letter or something that provides so we can say that we did work on this.
- She continued, after the RAC elect officers the committee can ask us whatever questions and then decide what issues you want to work on. And from there we will go through and decide when we're going to meet next, where are we going to meet, and all those things related to that and start this year's process.
- A nomination was made and seconded for the selection of John Hiatt as RAC Chair and Kimberly Reinhart as vice chair.
- The next RAC meetings are scheduled for November 12 and February 5 & 6.

Meeting Adjourned

Minutes certified by



\_\_\_\_\_  
RAC Chair John Hiatt

\_\_\_\_\_  
October 7, 2024

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date