

•Central Montana Resource Advisory Council Meeting
May 17-18, 2000
GN Hotel, Malta, Montana

May 17, 2000

RAC members in attendance: Hugo Tureck, Carol Kienenberger, Mike Aderhold, Craig Roberts, Art Kleinjan, Jack Billingsley, Ed Stoots, Darryl Seeley, Arlo Skari, Kim Lacey, Stan Meyer, Bob Doerk, Dale Slade, Jim McDermand. Absent was Steve Page.

BLM employees in attendance: Mat Millenbach (Montana State Office), Roberta Moltzen (Montana State Office), Dave Mari, Gene Miller, Bruce Reed, Ramone McCoy, Owen Billingsley, Gary Slagel, Craig Flentie, Kaylene Patten, and Kay Haight.

Several members of the RAC Missouri River Subgroup and members of the public were also in attendance.

The meeting began at 1:05 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Two members of the public offered comments. See Attachment 1.

INTRODUCTIONS, WELCOME, SYNOPSIS

Ms. Patten covered housekeeping items and reviewed the meeting agenda.

Mat Millenbach, BLM State Director, introduced himself, Roberta Moltzen (Associate State Director), and Bruce Reed (Malta Field Manager). Mr. Millenbach commented briefly on the recent Supreme Court decision concerning the Taylor Grazing Act, saying he did not think there would be noticeable changes, at least for the short term. Kim Lacey noted that the livestock industry appreciates the clarity provided by the decision.

Mr. Millenbach reviewed the helicopter tour of the river taken with Secretary Babbitt. The Secretary was shown the cottonwood regeneration taking place on Arrow Creek. After flying over the river, they landed at the Leroy gas field and joined in a dialogue about the effect a special designation would have on the gas field, and how both could be accommodated. Four RAC members were at the gas field during the Secretary's visit, and several others were present when he was in Fort Benton and Lewistown.

The Secretary repeatedly stated that all groups need to sit down, talk, and find common ground. Conservation groups and the river stewards will hold a private meeting next Wednesday in Stanford to begin finding common ground. Folks in Fort Benton will be meeting in the next three weeks or so.

He maintained his commitment to the RAC recommendations with no exceptions. The Secretary's emphasis is on making a change on the lower river (from Coal Banks on down), not

the upper river. According to Roy Wright, the Secretary may return to Montana in June, schedule permitting.

Mr. Millenbach said the Secretary is aware of problems associated with the appraisal of conservation easement lands. He said BLM must be cautious of two things--to acquire the rights BLM needs, and to figure out the kinds of easements that can be administered (e.g. different camping regulations on adjoining lands).

Members of the RAC introduced themselves.

UPDATE ON RAC SUBGROUP

Nedra Chandler of the Montana Consensus Council gave a progress report on the Missouri River Subgroup, which met the morning of May 17, 2000 in Malta. Ms. Chandler read the purpose statement from the ground rules document.

Nitty Gritty River Management. The primary purpose of this Subgroup is to seek agreement on recommendations to the Central Montana RAC. The goal is to focus on what the RAC has described as nitty gritty questions including, but not limited to, how should people be dispersed along the river, are campground facilities adequate, and in celebration of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial, what kind of experience should visitors and local residents have? The RAC specifically asked the Subgroup to concentrate on river management issues they can most affect and influence, and not get bogged down discussing questions of any possible new designation for the river. Every RAC meeting will include an update from the Missouri River Subgroup describing progress to date.

As an outcome of the Subgroup's April 12 meeting in Fort Benton, a coordinating team was defined as follows:

The Coordinating Team is a five-member, task oriented team that serves at the pleasure of the full Subgroup. It may be disbanded by vote of the Subgroup. The coordinating team is a non-decision-making body that works with the Montana Consensus Council and each other to make between-meeting communication more effective and efficient, provides on-call advice, or communicates on behalf of the full Subgroup to the RAC, and develops strategies to overcome any procedural, technical, or political obstacles to completing the Subgroup work, and reports back to all Subgroup members.

The appointed team members are:

Joy Crawford	Caucus 1 (permitted uses and financial interests)
Jim McDermand	Caucus 2 (environmental interests and recreation)
Harry Mitchell	Caucus 3 (elected officials and public at large)
Nedra Chandler	Impartial facilitator
Wade Brown	BLM

Anyone wishing to communicate with Subgroup members is encouraged to do so through the caucus leaders.

The Subgroup today passed two motions by consensus and adopted a work plan for year one. The motions are:

1. Asked RAC to follow up on its recent funding request to Congress for \$.5 million.
2. Asked RAC to request immediate reprogramming of \$75,000 for BLM to use this summer for visitor management activities, including:
 - Educational materials
 - Resource inventory
 - Visitor studies
 - Visitor impacts
 - Additional staff for visitor counts

The work plan purpose statement is to:

1. Complete a visitor use inventory.
2. Develop a strategy to address the identified problems around visitor use.
3. Deliver a package of recommendations that they have consensus on to the RAC by Jan. 15, 2001.

The next meeting of the Subgroup will be a September 25 field trip on the river to gather data and look at camp sites and the situation in general. They also plan to meet another couple of times before the end of the year.

Jim McDermand, also a member of the Subgroup, said that the Subgroup passed the two motions requesting funding because they need money to obtain information on the river. They are unable to go forward unless funding is received.

Carol Kienenberger asked if the \$75,000 reprogramming request is being asked of the Lewistown Field Office, the State Office or Washington, D.C. Ms. Chandler understood they meant to start with the State Director. Joy Crawford and Harry Mitchell concurred, saying they cannot address the problems until they have the facts. Mr. Millenbach explained the appropriations process from the field office level to the Washington office, and said more money

has been requested from the Washington office. Ms. Chandler reiterated there was a sense of urgency on the part of the Subgroup and that they understand reprogramming is not popular or easy.

Jim McDermand explained the \$75,000 figure was arrived at as an amount that may get another person on the ground to do survey work. They started with \$100,000 originally because that was the amount used for a Snake River study several years ago. Stan Meyer urged the RAC to formally support the Subgroup's request because if the Subgroup does not have hard data gathered by paid employees, rather than volunteers, they cannot go forward.

Motion: Stan Meyer moved that the Subgroup motion (\$75,000 request) be strongly supported by the full RAC for adequate funding this summer to get defensible and dependable data. The motion was seconded by Craig Roberts.

Discussion:

- In addition to the funding request, BLM needs a good list of what needs to be done, what data needs to be gathered.
- The Secretary said he supported extra funding for good numbers.
- The right survey questions need to be asked. An example cited was a question last year was "Would you like to come to the river?" rather than "Would you come to the river?"
- Agreed to put on the agenda for later a discussion concerning the University of Montana studies.

Call for the question: consensus.

In order to keep Congressionals advised of the internal funding request, it was agreed that a letter will be written to Secretary Babbitt by Hugo Tureck and Carol Kienenberger, with a copy to the Congressionals, Governor and State Director.

Motion: Jim McDermand moved that the RAC follow up on Subgroup request No. 1 for funding (\$.5 million). The motion was seconded by Bob Doerk.

Discussion: A registered letter to the Congressionals will be written by Hugo Tureck and Jim McDermand.

Call for the question: consensus.

Bob Doerk noted that the Subgroup is right on target with their funding request because the available data is weak and too variable. According to a report prepared by BLM for the Subgroup, there were put-ins of 5,442 boats in 1999. This conflicts with a report from last summer that the maximum usage was 125 in one day.

Break from 2:35 to 3:00.

TASKS AND DIRECTION FOR SUBGROUP

The Subgroup has already defined tasks for year one. An inventory of campgrounds and dispersal of people is the main charge, or priority issue of Subgroup. Members of the RAC identified other issues that need to be addressed, either by the Subgroup or by the RAC and/or BLM (*specifically assigned to RAC/BLM as noted*).

- Noxious weeds (*RAC/BLM*)
- Level of development for campgrounds
- How many campgrounds
- Maximum capacity
- Look at total 149 mile stretch for dispersal
- Visitor expectations and how close we are to meeting them
- Management of emergency situations (health, fire, law enforcement)
- How to best make sanitation facilities as unobtrusive as possible (blend in)
- Moving campgrounds farther off the river
- Building and maintenance of trails in anticipation of increased use (*RAC/BLM*)
- Cottonwood regeneration (*RAC/BLM*)
- Appropriate fee structure
- Permit system necessary or not?
- Way to differentiate between public and private land (brochure, signs)
- Potential floater/outfitter conflicts and ways to resolve
- Administrative concerns (data handling, administrative organization, money management connected to river) (*RAC/BLM*)
- Preservation of sensitive cultural sites (tepee rings, pictographs)
- Off-river information and education
- Pros and cons of artificial cottonwood plantings (*RAC/BLM*)
- Guidelines for lands obtained through conservation easements (continuity of land use) (*RAC/BLM*)
- Define “manage the people” and “protect the river corridor”
- Beaver control
- What types of experiences do people seek on the river?
- Limits on party sizes

The above list will be a good background reference of future work to be done.

BLM has just hired a person (full-time, year around) for three years to concentrate on weed management on the river. He will look at the whole spectrum of weed management, not just spraying.

Motion: A motion was made by Bob Doerk to recommend that fees generated on the river come back to the management of the river. The motion was seconded by Darryl Seeley.

Discussion: A fee demonstration area, like that at Kipp, could possibly be expanded to include the entire river. Currently, a certain amount of money is received at the local level from outfitter fees, but those fees do not all come back specifically to the river. Under rules of the pilot program, money collected at Kipp comes back to be spent at Kipp and cannot be spent elsewhere. However, if the entire river is turned into a fee demonstration area, the money generated at Kipp could be used elsewhere. Outfitter fees could also be used on the river. This does not imply a fee structure for the general public.

Call for the question: consensus

COOPERATIVE ECOSYSTEM STUDIES UNIT

Gene Miller presented information on CESU and their potential assistance to the Subgroup. Four regional CESUs have been set up across the nation: Colorado Plateau, Eastern Seaboard, Appalachian, and Rocky Mountain. The RM-CESU is a “new cooperative bringing together regional universities and federal natural resource organizations in a partnership for research, technical assistance and education.” The University of Montana, as lead, is responsible for going out to all universities in their unit and finding the best talent and knowledge available to address the issues.

Under the leadership of Perry J. Brown, Dean of the School of Forestry at the University of Montana, the Bolle Center for People and Forests focuses primarily on the Northern Rockies resource issues. They are very interested in the total scope of the Missouri Breaks region, including the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial.

The Subgroup has identified five areas where they could use CESU’s assistance:

- Education
- Visitor studies
- Resource inventories
- Personnel for visitor counts
- Visitor impacts

The University of Montana is recommending an individual to work with the Subgroup. BLM will find money to pay someone for 1-2 months to write a statement of work which provides information on what is needed and the best approach. Writing the statement of work is the only thing the Subgroup needs to do. Additional money, if obtained, could be used to begin actual studies, instead of just defining them.

Those items dealing with dispersing people (top priority of the Subgroup) would be funded by the \$75,000 requested by the Subgroup.

Break from 4:05 to 4:20.

SECRETARY’S RESPONSE TO RAC

The following discussion took place concerning Secretary Babbitt's response to the RAC's recommendations.

The Secretary is in contact with the Congressional delegation and the Governor concerning legislation to protect the Missouri Breaks in lieu of a designation.

The RAC has done everything it can to present issues/concerns to the Secretary. Consensus is absolutely necessary and Montanans are now talking to each other. Groups which previously had taken a firm stance either for or against designation now appear willing to compromise. At the meetings in Fort Benton and Lewistown, when ranchers and conservation groups expressed concerns that their positions would be compromised, the Secretary's response was "You're close, talk." He reiterated his commitment to gateway communities and development there, rather than in the resource area. He is aware of the issues and said a designation label is not important, but rather what guidelines are instilled. Traditional uses must be considered. Also, there are valid leases that must be honored. He said there will be no surprises.

The Secretary said he has nothing to do with designating wilderness, only Congress can do that. He also reminded the audience during his visit that in six months he will be gone, but the problem won't be gone unless it is resolved.

In visiting with industry at the Leroy gas field during the Secretary's trip, they said if new wells are not allowed the Leroy gas field will cease to exist. A discussion was held concerning the importance of taxes from the Leroy gas fields, and particularly the Lone Tree Bench and Cow Creek school districts. Without the tax money, the districts are done.

The RAC's position is that whatever happens to people in the area, they should be treated with the same criteria. The RAC has done everything that was expected of us. We cannot find a compromise between hard core ranchers and hard core conservationists. They need to do it themselves. We cannot answer the critical questions in a way that will satisfy the constituent groups. They must do it themselves. That process starts next week in Stanford.

Mr. Millenbach briefly outlined the NEPA process. For any decision made that would have significant impact on the environment, an EIS would have to be prepared. This has developed into a decision-making tool. From issues identified, resources inventoried and public scoping, alternatives are developed and assessed in a draft Environmental Impact Statement. Comments are received and a final decision is made. If there is a designation as a national monument or a national conservation area, the NEPA process would be triggered. Revising land use plans would also do that.

There was discussion that the triggering of NEPA would negate all work done to date by the RAC. Mr. Millenbach replied that would not happen, but rather the RAC's work would be identified as the preferred alternative. Other alternatives would be developed (either more development-oriented or more conservation-oriented). Some recommendations could be

changed. Hearings would still be held. There is no avoiding the NEPA process. However, legislation or an executive order could have a large number of the RAC recommendations contained therein. For example, if the RAC can agree on a boundary, that could be included in legislation and would preclude further discussion or action. Any future NEPA process would not contain those items contained in legislation or executive order (called existing environment). In other words, the RAC can help avoid some aspects of the NEPA process. Federal land management policy typically has general language with specifics to be worked out at local level.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Motion: Bob Doerk moved to keep the present slate in office into the fall or until the issue is resolved or until the date of the first meeting in 2001. The motion was seconded by Jim McDermand.

Discussion:

- Mr. Tureck has made a lot of contacts and has comfortable communication with the Secretary and the public.
- Can change later after the issue is resolved.
- Chair and Vice-Chair should come from different categories.
- Put a date on when new elections are to be held.
- A normal term would be at the RAC's discretion. Nothing in the charter specifies officers must change at given times.
- Mr. Tureck said he would serve as Chair until the issue is resolved and then would resign. He also suggested a chairman be chosen from another category. The RAC agreed the Chair and Vice-Chair should be from different categories to avoid the public perception that one category is running the RAC.
- It was suggested that a date certain be given, rather than waiting until the issue is resolved.

A counter motion was made by Ed Stoots that Mr. Tureck stay on as Chair, but a new Vice-Chair from a different category be elected to learn from Hugo when he steps down in the fall. The motion was seconded by Dale Slade.

Discussion: The Vice-Chair would not necessarily become the new Chair, but that is the way it has happened in the past.

Modified motion: Bob Doerk modified his motion to keep Hugo Tureck as Chair until the date of the first meeting in 2001 and a new Vice-Chair be elected today. The motion was seconded by Jim McDermand.

Call for the question: Consensus

Bob Doerk nominated Ed Stoots as Vice-Chair. Seconded by Carol Kienenberger.
Dale Slade nominated Art Kleinjan as Vice-Chair. Seconded by Stan Meyer.
Jim McDermant nominated Craig Roberts as Vice-Chair. Seconded by Arlo Skari.
Stan Meyer moved that nominations close. Seconded by Mike Aderhold.

The vote was taken by ballot with the agreement that the winner must be nominal (most votes wins). Craig Roberts was elected as Vice-Chair.

DISCUSSION OF THURSDAY AGENDA

Ms. Patten distributed copies of the Zortman/Landusky reclamation summary prepared by Scott Haight of the BLM, in advance of the review by Ramone McCoy slated for Thursday.

Biographical information on RAC members has been requested from the Subgroup. A form was passed around for those wishing to complete one.

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

Central Montana Resource Advisory Council Meeting
May 17-18, 2000
GN Hotel, Malta, Montana

May 18, 2000

RAC members in attendance: Hugo Tureck, Carol Kienenberger, Mike Aderhold, Craig Roberts, Art Kleinjan, Ed Stoots, Darryl Seeley, Arlo Skari, Stan Meyer, Bob Doerk, Dale Slade, and Jim McDermand. Absent were Jack Billingsley, Kim Lacey and Steve Page.

BLM employees in attendance: Dave Mari, Gene Miller, Ramone McCoy, Owen Billingsley, Gary Slagel, Jerry Majerus, Vinita Shea, Kaylene Patten, and Kay Haight.

Members of the RAC Missouri River Subgroup and members of the public were also present.

The meeting began at 7:55 a.m.

Because Category 1 did not have a quorum today, no motions could be passed. Ms. Patten requested a quicker process to approve meeting minutes, in part because the Subgroup and members of the media would like them as soon as possible. She will e-mail the minutes to each member in a format compatible with their software. A hard copy will also be sent to everyone so that attachments can be included. Approvals and/or changes can be done by e-mail or telephone. Any subtle corrections can be done at the next meeting. In the meantime, the minutes will be out for everyone to see.

FIVE YEAR COST ANALYSIS

Dave Mari distributed a five-year cost analysis, beginning in fiscal year 2001, that had been requested by the RAC members. (He noted that a new two-year moratorium on river outfitters was initiated in April.) This five-year plan includes base funding (resources already on hand) as well as projects previously submitted for funding in conjunction with the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial. Mr. Mari is requesting meetings with the Congressional delegation to review the plan with them.

Items emphasized by Mr. Mari were:

- Plan amendment. Some RAC recommendations will conflict with existing plans. To implement these types of recommendations, land use plans will have to be amended. If a designation is made, the funding level depicted in the cost analysis will not be valid because the scope of project will be different.
- Easements and acquisitions. \$3 million has been requested for the 2001 budget

year. Congressman Hill has attached a rider that it would be a no net gain philosophy that applies to Montana only. The Land and Water Conservation Fund is the only way BLM can obtain fee title acquisition or conservation easement money.

- Fort Benton Visitor Center. Nothing was recommended by the RAC to the Secretary, but he has commented about putting facilities in gateway communities, rather than on the ground. With the influx of visitors expected during the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial, the thought is that many people will be satisfied with a visit to an interpretive center (e.g. busloads of tour groups) rather than actually going on the river. Prior to the present administration, architectural designs and interpretive designs were drawn up for a new visitor/interpretive center in Fort Benton. That project has since been on hold. BLM has been working on a Memorandum of Understanding with the City of Fort Benton and the River and Plains Society to secure a community development grant (\$3.5 million) for restoration of the historical Fort Benton, which includes the oldest building in Montana. The River and Plains Society has so far rebuilt one side of the fort. Some of that money would be used for a BLM visitor center. BLM funds would be for staffing, maintenance and operation, not construction.

Visitor studies will be an ongoing expense. This plan is an analysis of what it would cost to implement the RAC's proposals. How do these numbers compare with FY 2000 actual? Total funding sources for the river total about \$152,000 this year, of which \$47,000 is available for managing visitors (volunteer stipends, maintenance worker and river staff, including five seasonal workers).

BLM will try to provide seed money for the University of Montana (CESU) effort. (See previous discussion.)

When asked about trading or selling parcels to pick up conservation easements, Mr. Mari responded that the entire exchange program is being closely scrutinized. There cannot be even the appearance of selling land, placing funds in escrow, and using those funds to buy conservation easements. No funds are currently available for conservation easements.

The easement process could be greatly simplified by not worrying about hunter access, etc., but rather with the main purpose of stopping subdivision development. However, just a scenic easement may not offer enough money to the landowners to entice them to come to the table.

RAC recommendations:

- Keep some money in the survey study category throughout the five-year period.
- Can BLM sell land and use the money to achieve conservation easements, instead of doing land exchanges?
- Scenic easements, just to prevent subdivision development, may be an alternative

for the river corridor.

- Put some money in the budget for future easements (e.g. the PN Ranch) so that if an opportunity comes up in the future, the funds are available.
- Put money into the budget for purchases. If you spend it great, if not leave it or transfer to something else.
- BLM hopes to get a policy by river segment (wild, scenic, recreation) that the RAC can look at and provide recommendations.
- What influence has Chouteau County zoning had on the easement process? Because subdivisions along the river corridor are already banned under zoning rules, there is less incentive for a landowner to give a scenic easement.

The Bureau was only willing to recommend \$3 million in the Land and Water Fund this year because Congress deleted all of it last year. It could possibly be increased in the future. Mr. Mari reiterated that the Land and Water Fund is not just for fee title acquisitions, but is also for conservation easements. Individuals wanting conservation easements should be contacting the Congressional delegation for funds. He reviewed potential conservation easements in the works but said the lack of funding does not enable BLM to act on them. Another problem is the appraisal standards being used.

Break from 9:15 to 9:30.

WITHDRAWN BUREAU OF RECLAMATION LANDS

As of last week, the Bureau of Reclamation will not be working on withdrawals this year. It is a low priority for them.

FIELD MANAGERS ISSUES

Off-Highway Vehicle Project

Jerry Majerus updated RAC members on the status of the joint BLM/Forest Service Off-Highway Vehicle Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Plan Amendment. He will send a Content Analysis Summary to all RAC members in June, and requested that they contact him if they need further information.

Questions from the RAC members:

- What effect, if any, has the Forest Service roadless initiative had on any of the preferred alternatives? It would not affect BLM lands, may affect some FS lands.
- How would BLM implement and enforce the restrictions? They will provide more detail in the appendix on how implementation would occur. It would have to depend on budget and staff workloads, and must include an education effort. Craig Roberts noted that the general public helps with enforcement.

- Did you get into signing, such as signing trails that are open? They will provide more information in the appendix on signing and have been checking with other areas to find out what works. For example, in one area of California signing depends on the area and the public using it as to whether it is signed closed or open.
- Regarding the North Dakota Section Line Law. RS 2477 does apply in all states, but only North Dakota has reserved the state's right to easements along section lines. In northern Blaine County, easements are held along section lines. Is there any statute to back this up? Are they legal easements?
- What are the differences between Preferred Alternative 2 and designated roads? The preferred alternative would close cross-country travel. Designated roads would specify for the public now where they can drive, rather than waiting for site-specific planning. We still plan a two-step process that includes site-specific planning. The long-term goal, currently in the appendix, is designated roads and trails. That will be brought to the front in the final EIS.
- Does the preferred alternative ever change? There have been changes based on protests received.

The schedule was reviewed by Mr. Majerus:

December, 2000	Final EIS and FS Record of Decision
Mid-January, 2001	BLM protest process completed (30-day period)
February, 2001	Governors' consistency review completed
March, 2001	FS appeal process ends (90-day period)
	BLM Record of Decision

BLM Drought Policy

Vinita Shea, Range Specialist in the Lewistown Field Office, distributed and reviewed a summary of the Montana BLM Drought Policy.

Taylor Grazing Act

A one-page summary of the Supreme Court decision on the Taylor Grazing Act was distributed to the RAC and reviewed by Ms. Shea. The long version of the Supreme Court decision was requested by Messrs. Tureck, Seeley, Kleinjan, Aderhold and Skari.

Zortman/Landusky Reclamation Project

Ramone McCoy presented an update on the Zortman/Landusky reclamation project. A briefing statement is available on the BLM web site. Reclamation is on track through 2001. A mining withdrawal will be implemented on lands noted in the handout. The Fort Belknap tribes have filed suit to have lands returned that were sold under the Grinnell Agreement.

Break from 10:50 to 11:00

OPEN DISCUSSION

Development of a land use plan similar to the Chouteau County plan. Does RAC want to pursue this? It would be difficult to enforce, lawsuits probable. A briefing from the Chouteau County Commissioners and AERO (Alternative Energy Resource Organization), a group that addresses urban sprawl, would be helpful.

Several RAC members expressed interest in taking a river trip. Given the potential logistical problems of accompanying the Subgroup on their September trip, Dave Mari offered to take RAC members along on other trips arranged by the BLM. Those interested were Messrs. Tureck, Seeley, Kleinjan, Slade and Skari.

How does RAC want the BLM to respond if the Secretary takes action prior to the next meeting? They would like to see a copy of the actual decision mailed to all RAC members (not a summary). They can then determine through phone calls if a meeting is necessary.

Hole-in-the-Wall water supply. The water is not potable, and BLM has placed a padlock on the pump. There used to be a sign asking floaters to water the cottonwoods, but BLM has been advised by the Montana Water Quality Bureau that it is no longer adequate to post a sign saying the water is not potable because not everyone can read English, or if they can, may not understand what it means. The outfitters will have a combination for the lock so they can continue to water the cottonwoods planted nearby. BLM is in the process of making the water at Coal Banks consistently potable. Within budget constraints, the same is planned for the future at Judith Landing, Kipp and, possibly, Hole-in-the-Wall.

Anne Booth of PHILLCO (Phillips County Economic Growth Council) thanked everyone for coming to Malta.

PLANS FOR NEXT MEETING/WRAP-UP

Agenda items:

1. Briefings from Chouteau County Commissioners and AERO re zoning
 - Discussion of land use planning to protect the river area
2. Greenfields tour/Bureau of Reclamation lands (arranged by Jim McDermand w/Richard Hopkins)
3. River data update
4. Noxious weed update/summary
5. Cottonwood regeneration - mechanical, cost, artificial flooding, planting. Make a decision after updates from:
 - Mike Scott
 - Sunburst
 - FWP on beaver impacts

6. Lewis and Clark Bicentennial update (Bob Doerk and ?)
7. Secretary Babbitt and decision/proposal update
8. CARA legislation update/implications for the river
9. Prairie dog, plover, ferret update
10. Missouri River Subgroup update
11. Funding requests (\$75,000 and \$500,000) and FY 2001 budget updates
12. Sage grouse, sagebrush habitat update (Craig Roberts)
13. Ferry funding projects (Art Kleinjan)

Where: Great Falls
When: October 17 and 18, 2000
Time: 8:00 a.m.
Public Comment: 8:00-8:30 a.m. on 18th
Field Trip: October 17 in p.m.
Meeting Location: Holiday Inn, Heritage Inn, or Hampton Inn

Travel vouchers were completed by RAC members.

The meeting adjourned at 11:50 a.m.

Attachment 1

Resource Advisory Council Meeting Public Comments May 17, 2000

JOE TROW

My name is Joe Trow. I came here today because we talk about lands in Montana. We talk federal lands, period. That's what the RAC board is here for. Under FLPMA, in 1711, continual inventory and identification of public lands, preparation and maintenance by Bruce Babbitt since 1993. He's never made one. There is no inventory of any public lands in Montana or under the Montana/Dakotas BLM agency. There is none. Then you go back after two years later and you become under range lands. This is in Title 43 USC, Chapter 37 (1978). It says range lands, inventory and management, public availability. I hope I'm the public, because I'm going to ask you people to get me a copy of this inventory on the range lands that are in your area of consideration, and for the inventory of all the public lands under BLM in your area of jurisdiction. If we don't have these, there cannot be anybody that can say this piece of land is wild and scenic. You can't go lease a piece of property because it says the Secretary shall manage the public range lands. It doesn't say BLM. BLM's going to get their authority from the Secretary. So if we have no range lands inventory, we have no lands to lease out under law. When we lease them out and the schools don't get their share of money back we have a terrible problem, I believe, because the law says we should get part of this range land money back from where it was derived. These guys paying these grazing fees, they know where it's derived from. They know their school isn't getting any of this money. So there is no accountability until we have the inventory of these public lands, BLM public lands. When we have the range lands of all the DOI inventory, there is no way that we can check on the amount of money that is paid in or comes out, there is no way that you people can say this land here is wild and scenic, this needs to go into a monument. If it isn't inventoried you can't do that. Thank you folks.

JIM CUMMINGS

My name is Jim Cummings, and I think all of you know me. I've been to several of the RAC meetings and just wanted to stand up on behalf of myself. As I read through the issues over the last nine months, or over a year now, I guess we're coming up on a year. It's been June since I've been coming to the RAC meetings. In documents that have come out of here one concern I have with regards to the issues and as it relates to the river because, of course, I have an outfitting business, is some of the things that have been passed on to Secretary Babbitt, and recommendations and things that are being worked by the Subgroup discussing historical uses. I'm very much in favor of those historical uses and just want to remind the RAC group that the longest historical use of the Missouri River, I guess by the white man, would be commercial use of the river. Commercial use when Lewis and Clark came up under Jefferson to open up the river, to find out about fur trade and use as a highway to transport goods both directions from St.

Louis, commercial use when outfitters brought people by steamboat up to Fort Benton, unloaded their goods and went back. So please keep that in mind when you talk about outfitter use on the river or suggestions coming from the subcommittee that the longest historical use on the river is that commercial use, or outfitting use, by people like myself where I outfit an experience for the public on the river.

The other thing that I would like to suggest as far as a member of the public, again relating to outfitting or decisions made by Subgroup that will be passed on to you and subsequently decided upon at this group, is that when management recommendations are made that it's not a panacea of the 149 miles of the river, that sometimes there's going to be specific management guidelines as outlined in the '93 BLM studies and management guideline plan that one area is recreational, one area is wild, one area is scenic. How do we manage those areas? I think we have to be careful that a blanket policy doesn't extend through the entire corridor. My own experience with outfitting is the largest impact is going to happen in between Coal Banks and Judith Landing, and there may need to be some specific guidelines for that area. But to say something happening in the recreation area from Fort Benton to Coal Banks applies to the area of impact down below Coal Banks, I don't think that's appropriate. So I just wanted to bring that up. Keep it in mind, and thank you for your time.