

Dakotas RAC Meeting  
 February 25-26th, 2002  
 Spearfish, SD  
 Holiday Inn

### **Attendance**

Bob Paulson	Jim Melchoir	Pat Stockdill
Harvey Malone	Rod Landblom	Jerry Kobriger
Dan Hutt	Rich Brauhn	Larry G. Nelson
Ron Ness	Gerald Reichert	Carol Koerner
Tom Quinn	Mary Buchholz	Doug Burger
Patrick Gubbins		

### **Guests**

Tom Fulton	Greg Lind	Toni Gentzler
Jerry Moller	Barry Williams	Russ Pigors

**Logistics** - Pat Gubbins went through the logistics of the motel, dinner reservation, We=re moving the SD State Prairie Dog Plan to tomorrow morning at 8:00 am.

**Doug** - Ice Breaker - the members introduced themselves, Doug asked everyone to participate an icebreaker game. Pat passed out a Team Norms sheet from Jody Weil. The members chose to delete number two and three. Delete ADon=t be defensive@. Replace with ANo personnel attacks - focus on issues.@ Delete ANo cell phones@. Replace with AResponsible cell phone use.@ The RAC will adopt the revised rules.

**RAC History and Charter** - Doug showed a PowerPoint presentation outlining RAC History and included details of the Charter.

**Administrations Agenda** - Tom Fulton reviewed the personnel of the Department of the Interior Starting with the secretary - Gail Norton, Asst. Secretary - Rebecca Watson and Director of the BLM - Kathleen Clark. He highlighted his career as well. Tom asked the RAC members if they had any questions regarding BLM. Bob asked where Tom was in the line of command. He is under Rebecca Watson, MMS, Office of Bureaus and Mining, Department of Interior.

Larry asked about arctic wildlife drilling. Tom said it is a matter up to the congress. Larry said he was glad there was the option of alternative fuels. Ron asked what goals the Secretary has laid out. Tom reviewed the goal. Jim asked about Internet coming back up to continue work with MMS, etc. Tom was told that MMS was guesstimating the checks. Bob asked what sort of interaction he had with FS. Tom replied he has a lot of interaction. A number of offices are co-locating which includes integrating cross functioning jobs as well. The goal is to make the merge seamless so the public would just talk to an employee - doesn=t make a difference it=s FS or BLM. Ron asked about working with State employees to take over some O&G inspections, etc. Rich asked about Homeland defense - Tom said we need to look at increasing security near borders that involve public lands.

**Fire:Urban Wildland Interface Project (FS Enterprise Team)** - Pat introduced Greg Lind. Greg outlined the duties of the Enterprise Team. Pat started out reviewing some of the background of this project. Greg mentioned that the Fire Plan was available on the Web. Harvey asked where the funding comes from. Pat said right now it=s federal money. Rod asked about regulatory processes. Lawrence County is looking at possible zoning. Homestake is looking at divesting of a lot of land which may cause some situations in the future. Tom said there is going to be a Fire Wise workshop here in Spearfish. Pat said Terry Chaplin from BLM will be one of the instructors at that workshop. Mary asked about the condition of the Pine Beetle. Greg agreed that they can be a problem in over crowded

areas. At this point it isn't a major problem. Pat said by treating the area for fire, they're also treating it for Pine Beetle. Harvey asked if any of the timber has been sold and if it has, where does the money go. Pat said the money would go to the US Treasury.

Dan asked if there were any incentives for private land owners to reduce the fuel on their land. Pat said they are struggling with that issue now. Pat said there are private land owners who have treated their land. They've been coming to the public meetings and speaking on this. Rich ask if there are any comments regarding FS/BLM destroying wildlife habitat (where they are actually improving it). Pat said they actually haven't had any comments like that. They have a \$600,000 budget at this point. Bob asked if they aren't encouraging Urban Sprawl. Pat didn't think so.

Bob also asked how they were prioritizing the emphasis areas. Bob suggested they help communities that show they are helping themselves. Jerry asked if by implementing this plan it would increase the deer population down the line. Game and Fish is a member of TEAMS so the issue may be deferred to them. Jim asked if there were conditions that private land owners have to meet on land that the government has helped. Pat said we can't force them to meet any conditions. Pat said he is not aware of any cost share set up as of yet.

**Subgroup** - Doug suggested these ideas might be something a subgroup could tackle. Pat will get research the project and get back to the RAC. Harvey, Tom and Carol all said they would be interested in serving on a subgroup on this issue. Pat would like to meet with the group Tuesday morning to see where they would like to go with this.

Pat introduced BLM employees: Toni Gentzler, Jerry Moller, Barry Williams, Russ Pigors

**WH & B** - Toni reviewed the main statistics of the program. Tom asked how long the people need to have the animals before they get the title. Toni told him one year. Tom F. said the WH & B program is one of the most difficult programs to manage. Some of it is managing the media in many situations.

**Weed Control Program** - Jerry Moller passed out Montana Noxious Weed booklets and a copy of the 2002 Weed Management Schedule and 2002 Weed Prevention Schedule. He outlined some of the treatment release schedules for various weeds in South and North Dakota. Belle Eldridge, Fort Meade and Little Missouri River Project are three major areas of concern. He has three cooperative agreements this year. Dan asked if new bugs for Spurge need to be applied every year. Jerry said it depends, if there is a big enough release to begin with it's enough. Sheep kind of just keep it in check, they don't kill it.

**Fort Meade National Historic Landmark Designation** - Barry Williams showed a PowerPoint showing some of the buildings and various views of Ft. Meade. Pat wants to make sure the local community is aware of the plans before they go forward with the project. Barry explained the difference between National Register, Landmark and Monument. National Register and NHL fall under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended. Clinton's landmarks were designated under the 1906 Antiquities Act. All the activities would remain the same at Ft. Meade if it became a Landmark. A bypass would impact Ft. Meade. Pat S. asked if there has been any recent move to resurrect the bypass issue again. Pat G. said he wasn't aware of any.

**Sage Grouse** - Jerry Kobriger handed out a Population Data paper. North and South Dakota Sage Grouse population size is about the same. Tom F. asked if the Sage Grouse were marked in any way. Rod asked if they are susceptible to drought. Jerry said they haven't done that kind of research. Rich asked why the population dropped in 1991. Jerry said it probably goes back to production. Jerry said

average brood size has been falling. Tom F. commented on the increase in the number of grounds since 1951. Jerry said people now recognize grounds, aerial surveys increased, survey areas increased, etc. Jerry handed out a performance report and a copy of Habitat and Management (Wildlife Society Bulletin 2000). Nationally, Sage Grouse numbers are declining.

**OHV Plan Update** - Doug reported that you have to keep an off road vehicle on existing roads and trails. The issue is still in Washington at this time. The next step is Travel Planning. We take a geographical area and go in with a GPS unit and overlay the road network. We'll look at the roads and trails and possibly close one trail if there are two that lead to the same place. We're in the process now of gathering data. We'll have five years from the signing of the Record of Decision to complete this.

**Chairman Election** - Doug reviewed the duties of the chairman. Jerry nominated Rod Landblom. Harvey moved that nominations cease. Tom Q. cast a unanimous ballot for Rod. Motion carried.

#### Next Meeting/Bin items

Have SDSU Graduate students update RAC on sage grouse studies.

Ft. Meade NHL status - Barry report

Water quality at Belle Eldridge

Bob mentioned that we need to bring North and South Dakota state maps to the meetings.

Rob asked if we can invite the Dakota Prairie Grasslands supervisor - Dave Pieper.

Pat Stockdill asked if we had any more information about making a FS member an official member of this RAC. Doug and Rod will look into working with Dave Pieper on this.

#### **Tuesday, February 26, 2002**

**Prairie Dog Plan** - Draft two of the state plan has been out since October. Chuck can get anyone a copy who wants one. Chuck reviewed the history of the Prairie Dog plan. SD began to participate in 1998. The Federal agency representatives sit on the outside in an advisory capacity. The plan deals with conservation, disease, land owners, public outreach, ecosystem. BLM is involved in acreage goals (by June of 2002) Tom asked if the management of the grasslands will have to change. Chuck said at this point no one knows for sure. BLM has a very small population. Chuck is not sure when the completion period is. Bob said the Stock growers have asked for an extension of the comment period. Tom F. asked if the goal is to reintroduce the Black Footed Ferret, Chuck said it is in some places, but not in others. Bob said SD is plague free at this time. However, we are right on the edge of a plague - it's coming. The prairie dog range goes east of the river.

Chuck updated everyone on the sage grouse in SD. They would like the RAC to be a sounding board, but they are just looking at it.

We'll keep the RAC updated. Jerry Kobriger said he would like a copy of the draft plan.

**ANWR** - Ron presented a PowerPoint presentation of his trip. Ron stressed that we need to have an energy policy. Arctic Power is pushing for ANWR. Ron suggested ANWR.org to check out as an interesting web site. Rod asked how much of the oil is used domestically. Ron said there is a provision for that in HR4. Bob asked if there were any provisions for closing down ANWR when it closes.

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Ft. Meade NHL status - Barry report

Water quality at Belle Eldridge

Cedar Hills  
Coal bed methane  
State Land Exchange  
ND Prairie Dog plan  
Fuels Management Plan input from sub committee  
Recreation  
OHV - potential field trip  
    O & G reclamation  
Biological Weed Control on Leafy Spurge  
Sage Grouse  
OHV - Road Closure combined with weed control  
Drilling Rig

**Next Meeting** - August 8:00 am 12 & 13, 2002  
North Dakota



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**Last modified:**

## DAKOTAS RESOURCE ADVISORY COUNCIL

August 12-13, 2002

Dickinson, ND

Badlands Inn

**Attendance**

Harvey Malon, Rod Landblom, Jim Melchoir, Bob Paulson, Dan Hutt, Steve Williams, Rich Brauhn, Mary Buchholz, Larry Nelson, Jerry Kobriger, Jerry Reichert, Reinhart Hauck, Doug Burger.

**Logistics-** Introductions – the members introduced themselves. Doug went over agenda items and outlined the field trip planned for the afternoon. Pat Gubbins could not attend due to workload on the burn area where they are now having problems with mudslides. Pat will be moving to Utah this month. We have not heard anything on the new RAC members as yet.

The public comment period opened at 8:00 am – no public attended.

Doug gave an update on the OHV plan. The EIS was protested by state of North Dakota to Director BLM dealing with section line access.

Doug discussed RAC member reimbursement. If you travel less than 50 miles there is no reimbursement for mileage or per diem.

Urban interface Subgroup – (Harvey, Tom, Carol) – Since Harvey was the only member of this subgroup in attendance there is no report. Some of the area has already burned. The topic will be rolled into the next meetings.

Cooperating Agency Status for Planning – plans for North Dakota and South Dakota are still in effect and won't be reviewed until 2007 and 2008.

RAC chair meeting in Phoenix – The Washington Office is planning a meeting in Phoenix, AZ for all RAC Chairpersons to attend on November 19-20, 2002. There will also be a videoconference on November 20 that all members can attend. Members can meet at the North Dakota and South Dakota Field Offices to attend this videoconference.

**Presentations**

Joe Smith from the South Dakota State University gave a presentation on the sage grouse study that is being conducted in portions of North Dakota and South Dakota. Why the decline? Not enough stands of sagebrush cover for females. Decline in big sagebrush? Tilling – once you remove sagebrush, takes about 25 years to regrow. Grazing by sheep is also a concern. Jerry would like information on Montana study in the Marmarth area. Dan discussed predator control.

Mike Fladeland with Montana-Dakota Utilities gave a presentation on the Coal Mine Study - Vision 21. Questions included water availability, employment, markets, emissions (environmental issues), location of transmission lines – use after end of plant use, BLM leasing.

Lynn Helms with ND Industrial Commission gave a presentation on the oil and gas production in the Cedar Hills Field, Bowman County, ND. There has not been much activity Northeast of Marmarth because there is too much water. In other parts of western ND, coal-bed methane tests have shown favorable results. The State of North Dakota has no specific regulations on coal-bed methane but they

will be regulated as shallow natural gas wells. A problem encountered in Wyoming with coal-bed methane is the difficulty of regulating surface disturbance by subcontractors making different roads.

Joe Satrom with Ducks Unlimited gave a presentation on setting up Conservation Easements. Fee owner still pays property taxes, and resource use is allowed so long as it doesn't violate the easement.

A discussion was held on the National RAC meeting. Need to review the draft agenda and give comments/suggestions. Need to submit accomplishments such as the land exchange and bullet areas of future involvement. A conference call will be set up for next month to discuss items to carry forward to national meeting.

Next meeting will be in South Dakota. Members would like to schedule for the crossover period of the legislature, which will be the last part of January, or the third week of February. Will discuss logistics during the conference call.

#### Next Meeting/Bin Items

burn area reclamation

land pattern consolidation

Mountain lion presentation

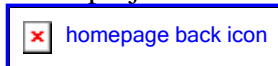
fee hunting presentation

Coal bed methane impacts –vs- oil and gas development – water

SD oil and gas development – Fred Steese

Steve Williams discuss the Forest Service plan that was signed in July.

The group adjourned to participate in a field trip. They will tour a drilling rig, look at bio-control results on leafy spurge and see oil and gas reclamation projects.



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