

Meeting Summary

Minutes - January 22-23, 2004

I. RAC Attendance and Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

9:05 a.m. Thursday, January 22, 2004 – Meeting Called to Order by Chairman William Roullier with the following members present:

Council Member	Resource/Expertise	Thurs 1/22	Friday 1/23
William Roullier – Chair	Transportation/ROW	X	X
Tina Nappe – Vice Chair	Environment	X	X
Susie Askew	Wild Horses and Burros	X	X
John Dicks	Recreation	X	X
Jim Eidel	Wildlife	X	X
Gerry Emm	Native Americans		
Jacques Etchegoyhen	Elected Officials		
John Falen	Nevada Cattlemen	X	X
John Gebhart	State Agency	X	X
Jerry Hepworth	Energy/Minerals	X	X
John Mudge	Mining	X	X
Ernest Paine	Livestock	X	X
Sherm Swanson	Academic	X	X
Larie Trippet	Public-At-Large	X	X
D. Craig Young	Archeology	X	X

MOVED – by John Gebhardt to approve the minutes of the October 17, 2003 meeting.

SECOND – John Falen

DISCUSSION –

APPROVED – by acclamation

II. Summary of Motions

MOVED – by John Mudge that if the Bureau is asked for comment on the Proposed Pershing County Land Bill the minutes from this meeting, January 22, 2004 be considered for comment.

SECOND – Jerry Hepworth with an amendment RAC will trust judgment and that someone come back to the RAC to let everyone know what was said.

SECOND – John Dicks

DISCUSSION – John Falen inquired if motion passes, will that preclude going to the Pershing County Task Force to gain the education. Jerry Hepworth replied that nothing precluding would be intended. Jim Eidel inquired if the RAC knew what they need to know. Tina Nappe suggested a subcommittee. William Rollier reiterated that the motion intends to use the minutes at this meeting and trust the judgment in the need that there is opposition the RAC will be asked to make comments.

APPROVED – by acclamation

MOVED – by Larie Trippet that the RAC authorize the creation of a subgroup consisting of RAC and public member to help with the Winnemucca's RMP, focusing on certain stages according to expertise. Proposing 15 members, plus or minus, at the discretion of the Winnemucca Field Manager.

SECOND – Jim Eidel

DISCUSSION – Tina Nappe suggested that the RAC as a whole to pick one plan and start to spend 2 hours or so working on it. John Mudge asked for clarification on public chosen. Terry Reed stated that notification was put out partly linking to the class partnership and then there was a few added here and there. Mark Struble suggested that this sub-group consist of Winnemucca and Carson City individuals.

APPROVED – by acclamation

III. Summary of Action Assignments

IV. Introductions

Chair William Roullier welcomed Elayn Briggs who is action Field Manager for the Carson City Field Office. Members of the RAC and BLM employees then introduced themselves.

V. Agenda Item Change

Winnemucca Field Office is recommending that the 1:15 p.m. item be moved to the 11:00 a.m. item and the 11:00 a.m. item be moved to the 1:15 p.m. slot.

VI. Field Managers' Reports

Winnemucca Field Manager Terry Reed's Report

1. Written Summary of the Report was passed out.
2. Additional items covered orally.

a. Jerry Hepworth requested brief mechanics of the government consistency relating to the Black Rock RMP. Terry Reed explained that it is submitted to the state planning team. The state will then issue a letter to the State Director with concerns and inconsistency found within referencing the state approved plan and the field office plan.

b. In reference to the Black Rock protests, John Dicks inquired if they in line or similar and was it diversified. Were they from an organization or individual or both? Terry Reed stated that the protests were from different perspectives both from organizational and individual aspects. John Dicks inquired if there is existing recreational activity that would curtail the plan. Terry Reed stated as far as transportation and OHV there was 800 and some miles of roads inventoried and OHV is consistent with previous discussion. There are camp sites, waters sites, and some arch site (located on the edge of the playa). At this time we are working with county, state and railroad representatives to combine the railroad crossings into only one crossing on the playa. Each Burning Man brings a new experience and accommodation.

c. Gibbons Land Bill

Tina Nappe inquired if NEPA would be involved. Bob Abbey states that NEPA would not need to be involved. DOI has not taken formal position on this because they have not been asked for input Jim Eidel inquired if the bill included checkerboard property. Terry Reed stated that within mine project boundaries and they are defined.

Terry Reed gave a briefing on the coal fire power plant, SEMPRA energy, located 6-8 miles south of Gerlach. Terry stated that the right of way application has been done but has not been filed yet.

c. Jerry Hepworth recognized the Winnemucca staff and Jeff Johnson for NEPA process and the ability to schedule set.

B. Carson City Acting Field Manager Elayn Briggs' Report

1. Written Summary of the Report was passed out.
2. Additional items covered orally.

a. There was heavy discussion on the Sand Mountain Recreation Area. A map of the area and an Area Responsibility was attached. This information is passed to the public that use the Recreation Area. Jim Eidel inquired if the Responsibility pages and the encourage/discourage routing system was working. Elayn Briggs responded that it seems a little better with fewer intrusions and Claudia Funas replied that the numbers have not been looked at yet but it doesn't seem to drop off that much. Elayn stated that rake tracks are done weekly to identify any instructions. They are tracking it very closely. There are problems with people going in the discouraged areas of the wash. Friends of Sand Mountain are working closely with the tribe due to monuments that have been placed on top of the mountain. Tina Nappe inquired as to when this was implemented. Elayn stated that implementation was put into place just prior to Thanksgiving. Tina Nappe inquired on the compliance in the wash area. Elayn stated that there is an entire season of work. They are hoping full compliance is met however it is a huge problem that may result in closure of the wash area.

Larie Trippet stated that he got mixed reports about the law enforcement in the area. In the riding areas they had complained the LE was heavy handed and intimidating but in the camping area it was good. This report was from individuals there on Thanksgiving weekend. Larie also stated that there had been no LE in the area in the past. Elayn stated that there were up to 10 Rangers in the area on busy weekends and running 24 hour shifts. There will need to be supplemental rules for MIP and they are beefing up DUI regulations. Currently there is no helmet or double riding law. They have several issues of speeding, domestic battery, glass containers, and non-payment of fees, just to list a few. John Dicks commented that the Domestic Violence and MIP should have the regular county LE working on those issues. Elayn responded that the Federal LE center can only uphold federal laws on federal lands. We could get some coops and delegation of authority from county to county done to help enforce the state laws. Churchill County will not regularly patrol the area due to the busyness of calls in town. Jerry Hepworth suggested possibly combining the themes from both programs making the BLM and regular LE more alike.

Bob Abbey suggested that the quality and interpreting to the signing could be approved upon.

John Dicks inquired where the users reside from. Elayn stated that 70% of the users at Sand Mountain reside in the Northern California area and the rest are in the Reno/Fallon/Carson City area.

William Roullier stated that the RAC would entertain a brief comment on Sand Mountain.

Rick Gray, representing the city of Fallon, stated that they sent out economic surveys to those who were present at Sand Mountain on Labor Day weekend. These were to be mailed back to the Center for Applied Economics and the data to be compiled. The preliminary results will be forwarded to Elayn via email. It will be a year long study and the communication was sent to Elayn. It was simple but extenuating. Jim Eidel inquired on the percent of the surveys actually getting returned. Rick Gray stated that they have received 55 back which is above standard. Because it was Labor Day weekend the recommendation was placed to do more than average on mailing of surveys.

Richard Hilton, representing Friends of Sand Mountain, stated that he was told there would only be 1000 acres used and then was presented with a plan for 2000 acres, all vegetation. He stated that he has continued to ask for a field or office meeting to "get behind the plan" for the last 3 months and has received no answer. He also stated that he has requested updated maps for the brochures but has not received that either. He stated that the LE was overzealous and suggested that some be eliminated. Suggested that BLM use regular BLM employees on a friendly basis to visit camp sites and OHV sites to get the major education done.

Dan Peterson, representing CORVA, stated that they are in the process of trying to resolve the monument issues. They are planning to go the tribe for negotiations around the second week in February to let them know where CORVA is going and what they are trying to do. They are in the process of getting permits for the monuments up there. There are some people that are upset because they were told that the monuments would be coming down. In reference to the wash area, Dan stated that he was approached by an individual in Modesto that gave him second or third hand information about someone that received a citation for going in the discouraged area. Dan stated that it is not illegal to go off the trail but rather encouraged or discouraged. He also inquired if there were rangers stationed in the discouraged areas.

Tina Nappe stated that there was a press release 1.5 million dollar campaign to utilize the outdoors and that the Federal government was asked to underwrite the cost. It is unfair that the community is not putting in their half and that the BLM is having to deal with all of the LE. Someone is not addressing the cost issue. John Dicks recommended that the police department, sheriffs department, and the BLM start an employee's relations group. Elayn Briggs stated that all domestic calls are routed the sheriffs department at this time. John Dicks stated that there is a lot to talk about.

Wilson Canyon Riparian Corridor trying to get a grant. Would like dispersed and permitted OHV use. Needing an activity plan and route design in Churchhill plan. Tina Nappe inquired if the RAC could be helpful in some way. Elayn stated that she thought so and would also like some involvement from the state.

VII. Forest Service Activities

1. Written Summary of the Report (The Elite Eight) was passed out.

Additional discussion on items covered orally.

- a. Gary Schiff and Kathy Lucich gave briefing on Peavine strategy. They are implementing pieces of the plan. The dynamics of motorized and non-motorized very different. Improvement will be made to main transportation in the following years OHV.
- b. There are some safety issues dealing with the hike to the Mount Rose Ski Area summit. They are planning a welcome center and a loop trail.
- c. There is a chance to totally recover the endangered species, Pauite Cutthroat Trout. There is a closed area not that could be opened.
- d. The Clear Creek Analysis strategy aiming towards recreation and organized access. There is talk about thinning the forest using SPLATS (a speed bump for wildfire).
- e. There is a challenge to get access to the mountain at the Douglas County Trails.
- f. There are problems in the Galena Camp Ground area. Thomas Creek could become open for day use.
- g. John Dicks asked about the Silver King Valley area and the population of the Cutthroat Trout there. Gary Schiff stated that it was the only place where they have recovered. Northern area is open and the Southern will be open once recovery is well there also.
- h. Kathy Lucich commented about family running animals on both USFS and BLM land that are non-permitted. They are running cattle on permitted lands. Letters of warnings were issued and a citation was given and received. They agreed to keep animals off the land for a year.
- i. There are 11 Cattle Allotments on the SE side of the district (Hawthorne heading to Yerrington). They are in the process of completing NEPA at this time. 10 out of 11 grazing allotments have proposed action. The decision was made to keep the vacant allotments vacant at this time. Kathy stated that generic NEPA documents will be made to get desired condition, identify condition on the ground and will monitor. There is very little information available with minimal documentation.
- j. Exploration of gold mining has 3 significant in Mineral and Lyon county. The Borealis Mine (looking for existing trails), Metallic Ventures (Aurora area, continuing exploration), and Bald Peak area (E of Walker, S of Yerrington, clay deposit/fertilizer, soil enhancer, no action there).
- k. In the Wilson Canyon area a gather group reached consensus the on the FS side (right off the highway) would not be acceptable for use. There was 440 acres adjacent to the highway that was closed and signs are going up at this time. The Friends of Wilson Canyon applied for a grant and have received some dollars. They will be helping with the signing, kiosk locations, and barricade. They will aide in finishing inventory of the trails

(GPS) and balance value of the fossils in the area to the OHV usage.

VIII. Proposed Pershing County Land Bill

Written Summary of the Proposed Bill was passed out.

Bob Edwards, Winnemucca Field Office, stated that the new bill would allow NLRC to receive credits for their land to purchase property in Las Vegas. Tina Nappe inquired if they would or would not directly receive the money. Bob Edwards stated that yes they would in a form of "poker chips". If they bid well it will reduce from the ledger if not then it will stay there. John Dicks inquired if it would be a tax advantage. John Fallen followed up wondering if they had property unsellable, what kind of an advantage would that be. Bob Edwards answered that it could be a buyout from that ledger and not real sure how it would work. Sherm Swanson inquired if there would be a discussion before any acquisitions. Bob Edwards stated that he was not sure. Terry Reed added that it is doubtful that the lands of this scale would qualify. There could be an attempt to block lands for efficient and proper use. Tina Nappe inquired about the process of getting the appraisals. Terry Reed stated that they are given at fair market value. Bob Edwards added that NLRC will give the land to Pershing County as part of the package. BLM would dispose of some of the public lands for economic development. John Falen expressed two concerns: (1) there is no net loss trying to maintain some lands that are allowed to sell and (2) it could take 20 years to sell. The county commissioners and county should really look at it. Bob Edwards stated that not draft legislature and not a BLM legislation process and concerns are noted. Tina Nappe suggested a site visit. Larie Trippet commented that the legislative way of dealing with land issues is becoming real common. Sherm Swanson inquired if a draft letter could be sent to the Bureau. Terry Reed stated that at this point we are not able to comment because we haven't been asked to.

John Mudge moved that, if asked for comment, to go back into the minutes and consider the comments. Jerry Hepworth proposed amendment to trust judgment and to come back and report to the RAC what was said.

John Dicks seconded the motion.

John Falen inquired if the motion passes, will it preclude going to the Pershing County Task force to gain the education. Jerry Hepworth responded that nothing precluded would be intended. Jim Eidel questioned if the RAC knew what they need to know. Tina Nappe suggested a subcommittee. William Roullier reiterated the motion to use the minutes at the meeting and trust judgment and if there is any opposition that the RAC will be asked to comment.

Motion was approved by acclamation.

IX. Winnemucca RMP Discussion

Jeff Johnson gave a briefing on what a RMP is used for. He stated that it established how the land should be managed and management guidance. There is 7.3 million acres of land

that is administered by the Winnemucca Field Office BLM. The process is dependent on funding and usually averages 4 to 5 years. It stresses the public's participation and the added benefit is a better plan.

Jim Eidel inquired how the process applies to a whole district. Terry Reed stated that it would be same process only bigger. Jim Eidel inquired if it was a shortcut by not doing range by range. Terry Reed replied that it is more efficient but still challenging. Larie Trippet suggested that it is based on the "use" issues or special consideration as far as doing whole or range by range. Jeff Johnson suggested that we need an updated RMP and then if we need new planning effort for one specific area then a new one for that area will be done.

The status of the Winnemucca RMP—Last September pre-plan was submitted to Washington for review and comment. The Washington office sent their comments and the Winnemucca Field Office is currently responding back and making revisions. This most likely will be done at the end of this month. A Federal Regulation Notice of Intent will be done and continuence of management situational analysis. Terry Reed stated that we are currently working on a plan for the Santa Rosa's but for all the forest we would need to meet to discuss issues and develop alternatives.

Jim Eidel inquired if there will be a Technical Review Team as the sub-group. Terry responded not at this time. William commented that it was his understand that Terry wanted the RAC's input. Terry inquired if they would want to be involved and if so how much. Would they want to make a sub-group? Sherm Swanson stated that the history of the RMP was around allocation of uses and users. Uses and users, instead of land health, etc. embrace the allocation of the resources. Terry Reed stated that there would be a certain kind of information needed to do that. Level of funding would factor in and the time it would take on the front end to pull it together. The outcome would have to address uses. There is opportunity to do that but staffing, funding, and participation would be the deciding factor. Sherm Swanson commented that it would have to be general recognition and adaptive management to take big ideas and apply them. Jeff Johnson stated that you would need to develop objectives and visions for portions of the plan.

John Hepworth stated that he attended the training and worked on the Black Rock RMP and would like to be actively involved. John Mudge stated that he absolutely feels that RAC should be involved.

Larie Trippet made a motion that the RAC authorize the creation of a subgroup consisting of RAC and public. Approximately 15 members, plus or minus at the field managers discretion.

Jim Eidel seconded the motion.

Tina Nappe suggested that the RAC as a whole should pick one plan and start to spend 2 hours or so on it.

John Mudge requested clarification on the public chosen. Terry Reed stated that notification was put out partly linking to the class partnership and then added a few here and there. Mark Struble recommended that the sub-group consist of Winnemucca and Carson City people.

Motion was carried by acclamation.

X. Round 5 Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act Discussion

Rex Wells passed out information.

Both the Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act and the Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act (also known as the Baca Act) have acquisition components and would like to combine the processes of the two laws to determine which funds are most applicable. Tina Nappe inquired if you combine the Acts will it remove the July 25 administration cost. Rex responded no it would not. The Act may change slightly but having the same criteria. Rex stated that they are gearing up for sales outside of the Las Vegas Area. He had no specific information on the acquisitions but did supply the group with some numbers. He stated 32 completed nominations for land acquisition, 31 capital improvements, and 71 parks, trails, and natural areas. Sherm Swanson inquired about the potential acquisitions and the status of them. Rex replied that there were 4 conservation easements in round 4 and 52 projects that have been approved but not funded at this time. Jim Eidel inquired if there was a map of the Baca disposal areas. Rex stated that each field office should have a map but there is not one consolidated one at this time. Also, he stated that they are looking to make some consolidated maps.

XI. Proposed 2004-2005 Wild Horse Gathers

Susie Stokke introduced Tony Strouse from the Humboldt-Toiyabe NF. Susie gave an update on the gathers. There are currently 102 management areas. AML has been reached on 79 of the 102 areas. There are 9 more to complete to bring the total up 88 which will bring it to 90% completion by fiscal year. Susie stated that they are looking at having 98% completion by the end of fiscal year 2005. Nellis did a gather in December that resulted in 1100 head. The Lahontan gather occurring at the end of January will hopefully bring 250 horses. This will bring the range down to AML. Susie further explained that most projects are at or below AML but it is literally in reach. Sherm inquired if AML is reached how many would you have to gather annual. Susie stated approximately 2200 head. They are using fraternity control treatments where the mares are injected at the point of gather. Ernest Paine inquired if the amount to gather is a set figure. Susie explained that it can fluctuate. If monitoring is done and it reveals that the AML is too high or too low than it can be adjusted.

XII. Wild Horse & Burro Management Statewide Standards & Guidelines

A draft version put together by Sherm Swanson, John Falen, John Gebhardt and Susie Askew was handed out to the RAC members for their input. Tina Nappe stated that she

appreciated Susie Askew for doing this and so timely but she had some concerns about the guidelines. She is wondering if they will mesh with the new range management guidelines. Tina suggested that they look at the new range management guidelines to assure consistency and maybe the OHV policy. Referencing the draft, Susie said that Standard 5 was the thinnest. Sherm has volunteered to help research a healthy herd and how many it consist of. Another reference to the draft, Terry Reed inquired of the natural predator introduction. John Falen suggested to pull out the word introduction and leave the natural predator statement. Ernest Paine inquired about the birth control aspect. Wondering how they will not reproduce when they eat a ton of hay a day. Susie said that it slows the reproduction rate down. Ernest asked if it was cost effective. Susie answered that it is more cost effective than gathers. Jim Eidel wondered why the birth control was good for 2 years why they could not make it good for longer. Susie said that it was science. This is only one solution. John Falen remarked that it is good for the second year and once they run dry you will double conception. Birth control is good on the front end, but not in the long run. Terry Reed stated that once down to AML you will get other options such as pulling off the younger ones. They are easier to adopt. John Falen stated that if you gather timely it will work and if you don't than it won't. Tina Nappe inquired about the other RACs input on this. Susie Askew stated that she will wait for 2 weeks from comments from this RAC and then send it out to the other RACs for input.

XIII. NEPA and Section 106 Consultation

Brian Amme gave presentation on concerns over the consistency of the application of NEPA. John Mudge commented that there are 2 things that dry the time out. They all seem to get an issue of two that are studied in encyclopedic depth. Only one specialist should be required to answer the comments, suggestions, and concerns. Is there any training around Project Management? Brian Amme stated that there is still ongoing training; however, the training mostly occurs at NTC. Terry Reed stated that the development of a schedule and proper managing is the two most important things.

Tom Burke passed out the notes for Section 106 compliance. Tom stated that there is training in the state protocol is done when and where it is needed on an ongoing basis. D. Craig Young thanked Tom and Brian for putting the permittee meeting together. He stated that pace was astounding and sometimes inconsistencies are good. Brian Amme stated that Section 106 is designed to mitigate impact.

XIV. Public Comment Period

Don Decker, a resident of Elko and Geologist by trade, step up with a concern about the Clear Water Creek acquisition. He stated that there are severed mineral claims that himself and Mr. Larry Hill owns. They are active exploration projects. He stated that he will protest in Round 5 when the public comment comes around on this issue. Tina Nappe inquired if question was ever raised about the mineral rights. Don responded that he did not see anything about it. Tina Nappe stated that it is really important that you bring this to the attention to the RAC. Don stated that there has been 2 county commissioner meetings and he was not aware of any notice to the public about such

meetings. Terry Reed stated that the first question asked to the owner was about the mineral claim. The landowner claimed that he did not know who owned the mineral rights. The Nevada State Office checked the mineral status and it was not split when it was patented. The split must have occurred afterwards. Nominations are done prior to NEPA and prior to the title work. Tina Nappe inquired from Terry Reed that if the Winnemucca Field Office were to acquire it would the public be able to come in. Terry stated that it certainly would not be open to mineral entry.

Continuing meeting on January 23, 2004....

XX. Next RAC Meeting Discussion

Due to conflicts in individuals' schedules, the new RAC meeting will be April 29 and 30, 2004. This will be a joint meeting. Mark Struble stated that this date would be fine as long as the NE RAC could change to accommodate. Mark stated that Boomtown was originally reserved so he will check on moving the dates (the meeting is now scheduled to be held at John Ascuaga's Nugget in Sparks). Agenda items for the meeting were discussed. Terry Reed stated that he would like to get feedback on the summary of the final plan, the process of RMP, and the involvement of the implementation. Also wanting to discuss the overview of statewide efforts as pertaining to sage grouse. Tina Nappe would like discussion on grazing regulations and stock water policies. Terry stated that the policy is not out yet. Still waiting on response or information from the state. William stated that March 2, 2004 will be the last day to comment on grazing regulations. Mark suggested that someone from Pershing County could come to speak of the potential bill. Jim Eidel stated that the FS in Utah are advising that worst weeds are coming and they are now addressing the future (5-10 yrs). He is wondering who the FS researcher is making these presentations. Terry stated his name was Chris (last name unknown). Mark inquired if they were wanting an information briefing. Jim Eidel stated that they would want a need to know briefing. Jerry Hepworth encouraged the compilation of the effort. Jim Eidel made a motion for a subcommittee. Call it vision 20/20. Mark wondered if this was a joint RAC issue. Jim stated that it could start at the next meeting and then take it to the Tri-RAC. Jerry Hepworth stated that the Great Basin Restoration should default back to Bob Abbey due to all issues being connected. Jim made another motion for vision 20/20 subcommittee to look at where we want to go to bring all issues together and look into the future. John Dicks commented that he does not think the subcommittee would be needed. Tina Nappe made a motion to take seriously the public lands issues, LE issues, recreational development, weeds, etc. We should know what the issues are and how much it will cost. Terry Reed stated that it is more umbrella guidance. Vision and goals to use in the development of all our thought. Sherm Swanson stated that he seeks to have a better understanding before having a voice. William Roullier stated that Tina, Mark and William will work together to get this going.

XXI. Pine Nut Mountain

Tom Crawford did a power point presentation on the Pine Nut Mountains Plan Amendment. Additionally commented that the existing plan is silent on wind and energy

and they are trying to get it into place because it is important. William asked where the power is going to go once energy is created. Tom stated that they are looking into that and also travel corridors for maintenance. Jerry Hepworth wondered if the RAC would be involved. Elayn stated that RAC would be involved after the public draft comes out. Suggested that it be an agenda item for April's meeting.

XXII. Truckee, Carson and Walker River Systems

Chuck Pope did a power point presentation.

XXIII. Field Trip to the Mustang Ranch properties and the McCarran Ranch restoration project.

Meeting was adjourned at the conclusion of the field trip.