

Intergovernmental Coordination Group Meeting

November 14, 2001

Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
Lower Snake River District (LSRD) Office

Participants: Dick Sheehan, Idaho Army National Guard; Charlie Chambers, Idaho Army National Guard; Wes Whitworth, Idaho Dept Parks and Recreation; Jeff Patlovich, Ada County; Neil Rimbey, Univ of Idaho; John Martin, BLM; Leslie Freeman, Dept of Environmental Quality; Vince Kozakiewicz, National Marine Fisheries Service; Donna Griffin, Ada County Parks & Waterways and LSRD Resource Advisory Council; Jim Desmond, Owyhee County Natural Resource Committee; Chad Gibson, Owyhee County; Ken Crane, Idaho State Dept of Agriculture; John McGee, Governors Office; John Sullivan, BLM; Mike O'Donnell, BLM; Jenna Whitlock, BLM; MJ Byrne, BLM; and Mary Jones, BLM

Mike O'Donnell, Team Leader for the Snake River Birds of Prey, National Conservation Area (NCA) and Bruneau Planning Area Resource Management Plans (RMPs) welcomed everyone and reviewed the agenda. All attendees introduced themselves and identified the agency they represented. MJ Byrne, BLM facilitated the meeting.

Mike gave brief introductory remarks about what the RMP's are intended to accomplish, the process and goals. He emphasized BLM is intending to use a collaborative approach to the development of these two RMP's with the public, governmental entities and non-governmental interest groups.

BLM's new approach to public involvement was presented, including the Intergovernmental Coordination Group (ICG). Mike addressed the purpose and goals of the ICG which include increased two-way information sharing and communication about other natural resource related documents or initiatives in development at other agencies. Increased data sharing among agencies was also identified.

BLM has contracted with the Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution (Institute) to assist with public involvement, issue analysis and provide mediation if conflicts arise. They will provide facilitation at public meetings held throughout the development of the two RMPs and will conduct an assessment of the area and some of its constituents to identify issues and concerns to BLM and recommendations for possible mitigation.

Recent BLM Washington Office guidance directs that detailed route designations for Off-Highway Vehicles (OHV) be completed as part of the development of the RMPs. Previously this detailed activity was undertaken after an RMP was completed, as a secondary tiered document to the RMP.

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires federal agencies to write an Environmental

Impact Statement (EIS) if a proposed action could have a significant environmental/socio-economic impact to an area or population under consideration for the action. Thus, an EIS will be written for both RMPs. After providing briefings to local, State, and federal officials, BLM has scheduled a series of five public scoping meetings. Mike addressed the purpose and format of the scoping meetings. BLM is seeking to listen to the concerns and issues that are brought to these meetings to make sure they are factored into the alternatives analysis that will be conducted in the EIS. Scoping meeting attendees will be informed about the many ways they can participate in the EIS and RMP development process, and encouraged to remain involved so they can have a substantive influence in the decisions and actions that result from the RMP/EIS.

Other information or planning documents that will be used as references during the development of these two RMPs:

- Owyhee RMP, published in 1999
- BLM's Land Use Planning guidebook including appendix C, which identifies decisions made in the RMPs
- Special status species designations
- Areas of Critical Environmental Concerns (ACEC) designations
- **Other plans as identified by ICG (i.e., Owyhee County Land Use Plan, State Recreation Plans, etc.)**

A question was asked about whether there will be any public meetings after the scoping meetings to discuss/identify, or "bundle" the issues identified during scoping. The group was informed that public meetings will be held throughout the entire planning process, including meetings to inform the public about how their concerns were bundled into management issues.

The National Guard was identified as a cooperating agency in the RMP/EIS development process. It was noted that the National Guard is not developing their own EIS to address impacts of their activities in the Orchard Training Area which is located in the NCA.

Mike asked the ICG representatives for feedback on whether a Framework and Objectives document, statement, or agreement would be appropriate for development for the group. He addressed a number of the framework and objectives:

- BLM will meet with the ICG prior to all public meetings
- Minority and majority opinions will be recognized
- BLM will meet when other members of the ICG feel concerns need to be discussed
- BLM will post minutes of the ICG meetings on its Planning website
- BLM will work with the ICG to create a state-level central data repository to assist BLM and other agencies in identifying available data. This repository is called an Automated Geographic Reference Center (AGRC) in Utah.

It was noted that some agencies use sensitive/confidential data, e.g. economic, personnel and cultural. It was agreed that it would not be appropriate to post this kind of data in a shared repository.

Mike asked those present to give him feedback/comments on the concept of a Framework and Objectives document, statement or agreement by December 15th. It was agreed that a statement would be included specifying the purpose for the ICG and that the authority of the agencies would not be delegated to this Coordinating Group.

It was agreed that Idaho Department of Lands will be invited to the next ICG meeting, specifically representatives working on GIS, grazing, and other land management issues.

Membership in the ICG was discussed. It was agreed that the following local, State and federal officials and agencies should be represented/invited to participate, with others to be added as agreed upon by the group:

- BLM, LSRD, Owyhee Field Office Manager - Jenna Whitlock
- BLM, Four Rivers Field Office, Snake River Birds of Prey NCA Manager - John Sullivan
- BLM RMP Team Lead - Mike O'Donnell
- BLM RMP Writer/editor - Mary Jones
- BLM ISO Economist - John Martin (Specific issues identified for which an economist can have valuable input: C.J. Strike and Swan Falls Dam Relicensing; FERC relicensing; and anadromous fish populations)
- Idaho State Department of Environmental Quality: Water Quality, TMDL - Leslie Freeman
- Idaho State Department of Parks and Recreation, Bruneau Dunes State Park - Wes Whitworth (OHV issues)
- National Marine Fisheries Services (need attend only when agenda items require their representative's input)
- Idaho Governor's representative - John McGee
- Federal Lands Taskforce (need to identify/invite a representative)
- Idaho Transportation Department (John McGee will contact and invite a representative to the next meeting)
- Idaho State Department of Agriculture - Ken Crane
- Idaho National Guard
 - * Orchard Training Area Commander - Colonel Charlie Chambers
 - * Environmental Management Office - Marjorie L. McHenry, Natural Res. Manager
- Ada County
 - * Department of Parks and Waterways - Donna Griffin
 - * Development Services Land Use Planner - Jeff Patlovich
 - * Highway Department (representative needs to be identified/invited)
- Owyhee County Chad Gibson and Jim Desmond
- Kuna and Mountain Home City Council (elected representatives need to be identified and invited)
- Idaho One Plan (representative needs to be identified/invited)
- BLM's Resource Advisory Council (RAC) - Donna Griffin

Mike O'Donnell introduced Neil Rimbey, University of Idaho, Dept. of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology, who submitted a proposal to BLM-LSRD to conduct a socio-economic analysis of Owyhee County. He conducted one in 1998-99, and feels the data in the previous report needs to be updated. He discussed the methodology he would apply in conducting the analysis. He said he sees five distinct "communities" with different interests in Owyhee County. A telephone survey (random) of residents would be conducted as was done in the earlier study. He will update a working economic model of the County. A sociologist will interview "key informants" in Owyhee County as well as on the Duck Valley American Indian Reservation. They will attempt to address social issues at the Duck Valley American Indian Reservation of the Shoshone-Paiute tribe.

It was noted that the Shoshone-Paiutes have informed BLM that they wish to only use the Wings & Roots Native American Indian Campfire Consultation meetings to discuss their issues regarding the RMPs. It was agreed to discuss the desire on the part of the two consultants to conduct interviews and discussions on the Duck Valley American Indian Reservation with the Wings & Roots forum prior to approving the economic study.

One issue identified with the proposed study was that its scope does not address Ada, Canyon or Elmore County residents' issues. All three County's residents will potentially be impacted by the decisions resulting from the two RMP/EIS. It was agreed that the potential socio-economic impacts to the other counties needed to be addressed. Wes Whitworth, representative from Bruneau Dunes State Park, indicated he could help with data collection if the scope of the study was increased to include impacts to the other three counties.

It was noted that the study needs to identify a method to address the economic/socio-economic impacts of recreationists coming into Owyhee County from nearby counties (e.g. Ada and Canyon). Economic impacts include road use, emergency and law enforcement personnel and vehicle use, etc. The study needs to identify socio-economic impacts of BLM's RMP on Owyhee County's land uses and Owyhee County's own land use planning process. The Study needs to address the economic and socio-economic impacts of the Idaho National Guard's Orchard Training Area activities on Owyhee and other counties in southwestern Idaho.

Neil Rimbey felt that their updated economic and socio-economic model of Owyhee County can be applied to the other areas and other issues. Different economic and socio-economic data could be inputted into their model.

It was stated that the proposed economic analysis can track/identify impacts of loss of Animal Use Months (AUMs) or changes in season of use.

Impacts on the regional economy can be identified, however, impacts to individuals cannot. It was agreed that this analysis needs to be added to the scope of the study.

It was agreed that two models would have to be developed. One of Owyhee County and one that addressed the four counties (Owyhee, Ada, Canyon and Elmore), including the Birds of Prey NCA.

Neil Rimbey and John Martin were asked to provide BLM with a proposal for a study that addresses a larger scope of area and issues. They felt they could have this to BLM by mid-December. It was agreed that a socio-economic study of this scope was needed for the RMP development. It was also agreed to move forward with the proposed update study of Owyhee County.

Three distinct areas of socio-economic impact were identified:

- Owyhee County
- Canyon, Ada and Elmore Counties
- Idaho National Guard's Orchard Training Area activities

It was noted that other agencies may have data that can be used in an socio-economic analysis that included the three areas.

Response/feedback to these draft minutes is requested by Friday, December 14th.