

INTERAGENCY COORDINATION GROUP MEETING NOTES

June 13, 2004

Participants: Dick Sheehan, Idaho National Guard; Charlie Chambers, Idaho National Guard; Jeff Cook, Idaho Department of Parks & Recreation; Sandra Mitchell, RAC; Russ Heughins, RAC representing Idaho Wildlife Federation; John Sullivan, BLM; Gill Green, RAC; Tim Breuer, Ada County Parks & Waterways; Steve Goddard, RAC; Eric Leitzinger, Idaho Department of Fish & Game; Mike O'Donnell, BLM; Mary Jones, BLM; Mark Robertson, Fish & Wildlife Service; Tim Duffner, Idaho Department of Lands, Mike DeArmond, Idaho Army National Guard; Ken Crane, Idaho Department of Agriculture; Dean Johnson, Idaho Department of Lands; Matt McCoy, BLM

Facilitator: Marsha Bracke, Bracke & Associates, Inc. (working for North Country Resources, Inc. and the U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution)

Meeting Purpose

The Intergovernmental Coordination Group (ICG) met on Tuesday, June 13, 2004, in the BLM Lower Snake River District Office Conference Room from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. The BLM's Resource Advisory Council was invited to attend this meeting as a more detailed briefing on the draft alternatives, and several were in attendance.

The meeting objectives were to:

- Review what has happened with the RMPs since the last meeting
- Discuss the preliminary alternatives for both plans
- Review the public involvement process for the alternatives
- Talk about the route designation process
- Review group action items.

Meeting participants were provided an agenda, a folder which included a series of handouts, and a number of other documents were copied and distributed. In total, participants received copies of the

1. Agenda
2. June 8, 2004 briefing sheet describing alternatives development, route designations, impact analysis and additional outreach
3. June 8, 2004 briefing sheet providing background information on the NCA collaborative planning and public participation process, products and work completed to date
4. June 8, 2004 NCA Briefing sheet describing the area and summarizing the alternatives
5. June 4, 2004 NCA Objectives and Proposed Management Actions Table
6. Maps: NCA Land Ownership-1, NCA Slickspot Peppergrass Occurrences-Map5, NCA Areas closed to Grazing-Map 4, IDARNG Military Training-Maps 3, 4 & 5, NCA IDARNG Expansion Area-Maps 7 & 8, NCA Proposed Excavation Area-Map 10, NCA Current Avoidance Area-Map 3, NCA Proposed Avoidance Area-Maps 4 & 5, NCA State Land Exchange-Map 7, NCA Proposed Boundary and Land Ownership-Map 6, NCA Existing Shooting Restrictions-Map 4, NCA Proposed Shooting Restrictions-Map 13, NCA Existing OHV Area Designations-Map 14, NCA Proposed OHV Designations-Map 17

7. Bruneau Resource Area map
8. June 8, 2004 Bruneau Briefing sheet describing the area and summarizing the alternatives
9. June 7, 2004 Bruneau Objectives and Proposed Management Actions Table
10. Maps: Bruneau Roads and Trails by Subregion, BRU Vehicle Designations-Maps 12, 13, 14 & 15
11. June 7, 2004 ACECs in Bruneau Land Use Plan Values and Threats
12. Legend for ACEC Tables
13. Maps with ACEC Tables: Special Designations Maps 1, 2, 3, & 4
14. NCA & Bruneau Public Issue Statements
15. NCA & Bruneau Desired Future Condition Statements
16. Travel Management Planning & Route Designation Process power point presentation by Les Weeks
17. 2002 Route Evaluation/Designation Decision Tree brochure

Discussion: Status

Mike O'Donnell, BLM reported that URS has been contracted to do the analysis, and has started based on information available to date but will not be able to complete until the alternatives come together in their draft form. The BLM's Interdisciplinary teams have been working hard at putting together the draft alternatives, and have them to the point that the agencies and public can have meaningful input in completing them. Feedback from the Resource Advisory Council, Intergovernmental Coordination Group, Counties and General Public is sought. Mike reminded the group that these alternatives differ from earlier RMPs and EISs developed by the BLM, as all the alternatives are based on reaching agreed-upon desired future conditions and outline different ways to get there. Unlike many RMPs, these do not take an "extreme right" and "extreme left" position and then build an alternative or two "in the middle." For example, a "no grazing" alternative was thrown out as not being viable. Similarly, a "no military training" was also thrown out as not being a viable alternative. Rather, they built a range of alternatives all of which are valid in their ability to reach the desired future condition.

Tim Breuer asked and Mike responded that yes, the RMPs are separate and moving concurrently; however, how they are moving apart is that their draft alternatives look very different. They are two different plants with two different decisions. Public outreach activities will continue to be coordinated and combined as much as possible to create efficiencies for the public.

Discussion: Alternatives

Mike O'Donnell handed out a packet which contained all materials identified in items 2-13 above. The group reviewed each of those pieces with the intent to provide some familiarity with the alternatives and their rationale, respond to questions, and enable participants to make sense of the material and take it back and respond accordingly. Specifically, Mike said that he is interested in knowing if participants think there is a reasonable range, whether something has been missed, and is consistent with legislative constraints and other agency planning efforts.

John Sullivan, BLM, reviewed the NCA maps that illustrated some of the existing and different alternatives for management of the NCA and responded to participants' questions. Similarly,

Mike and Matt McCoy, BLM, reviewed the Bruneau materials and responded to participants questions. Mike pointed out that there will be a narrative, called "Chapter 2," that will soon be available and will provide the rationale to support the objectives and management actions outlined in the table.

Some of the group's discussion focused on:

- The different areas and opportunities for training and maneuvering for the Idaho Army National Guard, with additional clarification provided by Charlie Chambers, IDARNG
- Coordination efforts between the BLM and the Idaho Department of Lands and land exchanges, and the arrangement between the OTA and the State
- The impact of land exchanges on Slickspot Peppergrass, and the acknowledgement that all agencies have signed the Slickspot Peppergrass Conservation Agreement and are bound to the same type of management objectives
- The manner in which the Bruneau alternatives considered all of the proposed ACECs and WSAs by looking at values and threats and finding ways to address those, and that ACECs will have implementation plans that are not at the RMP level
- The role of the Owyhee Initiative...Russ Heughins, RAC, pointed out that the scope of the initiative applies to all of Owyhee County and will require a revisit of applicable RMPs if it is successful. Mike said that through the cooperators, ICG, RAC and County involvement that many of the Initiative members are instrumentally involved in the RMP process as well.

Participants were asked to refer to the Web Site as a reminder of the project purpose and need, and were provided hard copies of the public issue statements and the desired future condition statements, as a point of reference and context for their review of the draft alternatives.

Participants are to provide comments to the BLM no later than July 30, 2004, although the BLM did express a preference to receive them earlier so that agency comments can be reflected in the material that goes to the public in late June and early July.

Discussion: Route Designation

Mike reminded the group that early in this process he indicated route designation might be included as part of the RMP process, and that designation decisions will be made in this level of planning document. The RMP requirement is to identify area designations, (closed, open and limited) and to identify criteria to be used in making route designations. BLM has decided to take the next step and make the actual route designations. A route designation process contractor, Les Weeks of ARS, Inc., has started his work on the project. BLM has what they think is a good inventory of roads and trails, based on aerial photos taken in 1998, an inventory made in the 1970s, and on-the-ground validation and refinement of all of those materials. The inventory has been input into a GIS format, and verification continues.

Les Weeks has worked on route designation in the Mojave Desert and other places, and brings a patented process that is objective, consistent and practical. Mike handed out two documents provided by Les Weeks, including a power point presentation and a brochure describing his route designation process. The process, Mike reports, will likely not be completed by the time the RMP decisions are made given its late start and the need for additional comment and involvement, but designation will be submitted as a supplemental EIS to the RMP and will be an

implementation decision. The RMP decision, however, will influence the designation process in that whatever alternative is chosen will generally guide what the emphasis for decision-making will be on designating routes.

Discussion: Public Involvement

A series of public meetings to review draft alternatives have been scheduled for June 28, 30 and July 1 on the NCA, and July 12, 13 and 15 on the Bruneau. These meetings are designed to provide participants with a status of the work completed to date, an overview of the draft alternatives and how they differ in their attempt to reach the desired future condition statements, and the opportunity to, in a breakout group, enable participants to look at each alternative from an issue-specific perspective. Participants will be provided with complete packets and comment forms when they leave the meeting, and asked to take the time to review them in detail, providing written comments by July 30, 2004. ICG and RAC members are encouraged to attend these public meetings.

Action Items

1. Marsha will deliver the draft meeting notes to BLM by Friday.
2. RAC and ICG participants will review the draft alternatives and provide their comments to Mike no later than July 30, 2004 and earlier if at all possible.
3. BLM will have maps referenced in the Table posted to the BLM planning web site (www.id.blm.gov) by the end of this week or early next week.

Next Meeting

Another meeting of the ICG will be held following the collection of ICG and other stakeholder input and consideration, and before the revised alternatives take a formal form.