

Fremont County WPLI Advisory Committee Minutes (Corrected)

June 6, 2016 | 7:00 p.m. | Fremont County Commissioners Chambers

Meeting called by	Douglas L. Thompson, Fremont County Commissioner and WPLI Commissioner /Coordinator	Advisory Committee Attendees: Reg Phillips, Julia Stuble, Nick Dobric, Rick Mickelson, Josh Milek, Andy Blair, Ginger Bennett, Gary Horton, Travis Becker, Doug Thompson
Type of meeting	Introductory	
Note taker	Becky Enos, Fremont County Commissioner Administrative Secretary	Other Attendees: Stephanie Kessler, Jazz McDonald, Tim Hudson, and Jason Baldes

AGENDA TOPICS

Welcome | Commissioner Thompson

Commissioner Thompson provided background related to the Fremont County Commissioners' decision to participate in the Wyoming Public Lands Initiative.

Purpose | Commissioner Thompson

Commissioner Thompson reviewed the groups from which the Advisory Committee members were selected (Agriculture/Ranching, Sportsman, Energy, Conservation, Motorized Recreation, Non-Motorized Recreation, General Public and County Commissioner). Fremont County reviewed 51 applications from interested public to look at the eight wilderness study areas in Fremont County: Lankin Dome, Split Rock, Miller Spring, Savage Peak, Sweetwater Canyon, Copper Mountain, Dubois Badlands, Whiskey Mountain and Honeycomb/Oregon Buttes. The Committee will look at the areas' histories, current uses, existing rights and potential for future use. If the areas overlap into other counties, coordination will be done accordingly. For example, Natrona County will participate in the WSA that overlaps with them and bring a group to the site visit. Sweetwater County has declined to participate at this time.

During the second year, there may be other proposals . One is a potential land exchange on the Lander Slope.

Introductions | Commissioner Thompson

The committee members provided their names and WPLI category positions, roles in the community, and brief review of their interest in the process. Other attendees gave their names and roles in the community as well.

History | Commissioner Thompson

The County has agreed to enter into the state-wide initiative to advance legislation addressing Wyoming's 42 Wilderness Study Areas, which were inventoried (but not designated by Congress) and found to have wilderness characteristics as described in Section 603 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 and Section 2(c) of the Wilderness Act of 1964. WSAs are managed as wilderness until Congress advances legislation to release an area from management to retain its wilderness characteristics or to officially designate an area wilderness. Commissioner Thompson distributed a "Wyoming WSA Release/Designation Discussion Paper" for more history at the national and state level. Three activities have been grandfathered in: Existing Grazing, Mining and Mineral Leasing.

Process | Commissioner Thompson

Commissioner Thompson is the WPLI Commissioner/Coordinator. There are free facilitator options available if the group thinks that is the way to go, some Counties are doing this (Park County is using the Extension person). He stated the Ruckelshaus Institute also has free facilitator options available.

All recommendations will be forwarded to the Board of Fremont County Commissioners. Nothing is off the table and if changes are made at the Commission table, they will be sent back to the Committee. Once approved by the Commission, they will be sent Wyoming County Commissioners Association for formatting and distribution to the Congressional Delegation. If WCCA, Governor or Congressional Delegation don't like the recommendation, they cannot change without the County's blessing (Advisory Committee decision). We need to provide fidelity to the citizens of Fremont County.

What can be done now? There are a range of options to consider, technically we can do anything. Realistically, need to figure out what we want to recommend for use in each of the WSAs. This will include: How it got listed originally, uses in the interim, current use and potential future use.

The Lander BLM Resource Management Plan has been completed so there is information on the WSAs available. He distributed copies of Types of Special Management (from BLM Land-Use Planning Handbook, H-1601) for review. Julia Stuble had earlier forwarded the BLM Wilderness Study Areas map and copies were distributed to the group.

A Wyoming Public Lands Initiative County Advisory Committee Model Charter was distributed, provided by the Ruckelshaus Institute, which Commissioner Thompson asked the group to review. A group charter defines the protocols of the collaborative process and gives the Advisory Committee a framework to follow.

Commissioner Thompson stated he hopes to characterize the group efforts as "we". We will consider what is presented by fellow members and the public respectfully and fairly. The goal for the group is to respect, even if you may not agree. The group discussed having alternate types of voting and Doug's participation after his Commission term ends.

Commissioner Thompson distributed "Wyoming WSA Congressional Recommendation Strategy" paper for review. In particular, County Recommendation Procedure was discussed (II). Also distributed was "Proposal: Wyoming WSA Designation/Release Strategy" paper.

Discussion was held on how the process to conduct the meetings. Questions can be fielded via e-mail but be aware these are part of the public record. He and Commissioner Becker have talked about creating a line item in the Commissioners budget for materials, etc. Could talk about contributions from different groups but may create a cloud over the transparent process.

Discussion was then held regarding what a majority vote consists of (100%, 50%, etc.). There was considerable comment on this and Commissioner Thompson asked the group to think about it for discussion at the next meeting.

Minutes will be posted on both the County Website and the State WCCA Website. There is the expectation that the Committee members share the information with their individual constituencies and others their category represents. Other ways to get the word out included news media, radio programs (Chit Chat, Coffee Time), County 10, Chamber of Commerce Calendar, Wind River Visitor's Council, Service Organizations (Lions Club, Kiwanis Club, Rotary, etc.). Reg discussed local avenues as well (Dubois Roundup). Social Media was also discussed (Facebook, etc.).

Election of a Committee Chairman was discussed. Travis Becker moved, Ginger Bennett seconded, to elect Commissioner Thompson as Chairman of the Advisory Committee. Motion carried unanimously.

Future Meetings (Regular and Site Visits) | Commissioner Thompson

Discussion was held on pre-site, on-site and post-site visits and tasks. The group was polled regarding the best time to schedule site visits (time and day). It will be necessary to document all comments and possibly record the commentary. Pre-information (history) prior to the visits will be important. Post-visit tasks will be to review comments right away and contact individuals participating if more information is required. This will be a task for members.

Talked about how many meetings a month would be needed, longer meetings will be necessary before on-site visits. Perhaps one site visit a month? Summer will be information gathering and clarification.

The next meeting was scheduled for Monday, June 20, 2016, at 6:00 p.m. in the County Commissioners Chambers. The group will discuss planning site visits in July.

Other Business | Commissioner Thompson

Public comment was held. Jason Baldes, Wind River Native Advocacy Center, stated the importance of keeping both the Northern Arapaho and Eastern Shoshone Tribal Council's updated and the process and visits. He stated that in 1863, the Wind River Indian Reservation encompassed one half of the State of Wyoming, five years later, it was reduced to its present size. The Tribes have been in the game for a long time and should have a seat at the table. He expressed appreciation to the Committee for their time and commitment.

Steff Kessler, Wyoming Outdoor Council, stated her preference to have a professional facilitator so that they can help guide the Committee through the steps and be concerned with substance, not process. At some point, the public should become more involved such as place based sub-groups.

Homework | Commissioner Thompson

The Committee members were requested to review the handouts distributed.

Need to agree to process items such as what constitutes a quorum.

Adjourn | Commissioner Thompson

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.