

Fremont County WPLI Advisory Committee Minutes

July 11, 2016 | 6:00 p.m. | Fremont County Commissioners Chambers

Meeting called by	Douglas L. Thompson, WPLI Commissioner /Coordinator	Advisory Committee Attendees:
Type of meeting	Regular	Reg Phillips, Julia Stuble, Nick Dobric, Rick Mickelson, Josh Milek, Andy Blair, Ginger Bennett, Gary Horton and Travis Becker
Note taker	Becky Enos	Other Attendees: Gabriel Spoonhunter, Cassidy Irvine, Kim Wilbert, Tim Hudson, David Lloyd, Dick Inberg, Mark Keiser, Helen Nichols, Byrl Nichols, Mary Beth Flanders, Jared Oakleaf, Jessi Johnson, Peter Simer & Chamois Andersen

AGENDA TOPICS

Welcome | Commissioner Thompson

WPLI Advisory Committee members introduced themselves. Audience members also introduced themselves. Doug reviewed some concerns he has heard that the process is taking too long to complete. There is a lot of interest in the process regarding the information the County will forward to the State. It will be aggregated and become part of a public land bill. If the County does not do their due diligence to set ground rules, and then follow them, it may come back to bite us. The laboring part that we spend now will help as we move the recommendations on up the line. Gary stated he hoped nobody had any preconceived agendas or ideas for the end product and he felt they should take as much time as needed. Nick stated the process needs to happen and they need to take the time needed, maybe a Charter facilitator could help. Andy, Ginger and Julie agreed and Julia stated they need to go slow to go fast. Travis said he hoped the Charter could be finalized so the group can move forward and start producing results. Andy suggested making lists and moving on. Doug stated the draft Charter can be amended if needed, and an honest effort needs to be made to follow the process set forth in it.

Approval of Minutes | Commissioner Thompson

The minutes of the regular meeting held June 20th were reviewed. Travis moved, Ginger seconded, to approve them as presented. Motion carried unanimously. Relevant documents will be attached to the minutes before forwarding to the WCCA Hub (draft Charter, Site Evaluation Tool and Site Visit Comment Form). For consistency, the group asked that the minutes be formatted the same for each meeting.

Site Visit | Commissioner Thompson

Location: The first site visit is scheduled for Copper Mountain on July 14th. A Game and Fish representative and BLM Outdoor Recreation Planner (Jared Oakleaf) will both be in attendance. Tribal representation was also invited and Mr. Spoonhunter, present in the audience, stated that Jason Baldes would most likely be the person to attend. Reg has been in contact with area landowners (Herbst and Humphrey families) and stated the permittees have one permit for horses and the other for livestock, limited as far as grazing in the area. Doug asked all Advisory Committee members to notify their individual constituency to spread the word.

Presentation:

BLM Outdoor Recreation Planner Jared Oakleaf was present to provide an overview of the area. Doug reminded the group that the agencies involved can provide information only as they have been forbidden to take an advocacy position. Jared distributed a handout on Copper Mountain including Historical Use, Rationale for Potential Wilderness, Recommendation For or Against Wilderness, WSA Interim Activity and Current Situation. He stated there is not much change from the recommendations in the handout, there is not a lot of public interest in the area. Old gold mine activity exists outside of the study area. Nick stated there may be some dispute on access road ownership into the WSA. Doug stated Birds Eye Road is a County Road and there should be no reason for dispute. The BLM Resource Management Plan was discussed as related to the area and Doug stated he would pull the information on this site from the RMP for review. Julia inquired into the status of mining leases as per the 1991 Report and Jared stated he did not think there were any active leases in the area at this time. She is also interested in the big picture and the context to understand landscape. Doug stated it would be the goal of the AC to look at the area and come up with a list of questions and get analyses prior to picking a recommendation. Josh asked if there was any inventory of historical sites in the area to be considered, and Jared stated an in-depth study has not been done and is unknown. Byrl Nichols (audience member) stated he is a rock hound and knows the area well, cannot say for certain these sites exist but there is potential. Dick Inberg (audience member) reviewed gold exploration and the potential to carry gold in quartz north of the WSA and there are some other areas for wilderness potential and first class areas and asked if this was the time to bring it into the discussion.

Doug stated the goal of the AC is to visit the existing WSA's then field other suggestions (land swap and other areas of interest). The time frame would be at least next year before the AC is ready for additional sites.

Logistics: Doug has gotten approval to meet at the Shoshoni Town Hall at 1:00 pm and carpool to Birds Eye Road to tour the area, and should return between 4:00 pm and 5:00 pm. Extra cars can be left in the parking lot. They could visit Boysen near the highway before the camper entrance to see the area that touches the Wind River Indian Reservation before the WSA site.

Draft Site Evaluation Tool: The document was finalized as amended

Draft Site Visit Comment Form: The document was finalized as amended. Josh will create a Google form for the public to access.

Advertising: Doug stated the group is working on advertising and public outreach and asked the members of the audience to help spread the word. He again extended an invitation to tribal representatives to partake in the site tour. The tour information is available on the state WCCA website hub, Gary prepared a very informative flyer and it has been distributed, good idea and he was thanked from the group. Keeping the website updated is important and the public needs to take the initiative to be involved and updated on events happening. At this time, it was suggested a subcommittee be formed to handle advertising: Josh, Gary, Julia, Nick and Rick. They will develop a cohesive strategy (website, County 10, etc.) and report back at the next Regular WPLI meeting.

Process Discussion | Commissioner Thompson

Steve Smutco, Ruckelshaus Institute: Introduced the Institute as a division of the University of Wyoming School of Environment and Natural Resources. He distributed a Code of Conduct handout as well as a Collaborative Problem Solving: Services, Roles, and Responsibilities of Ruckelshaus Institute Facilitators. He stated his great respect for natural resources management in Wyoming and he talked about what the Institute does and their role in the facilitation process. He stated there is himself and one other that can serve as facilitators and can hire additional if needed, they strive for one individual to be involved throughout the process. He stated the Institute could bring experience to the table in environmental management and policy. Travis asked how the Institute was funded, as they have to cover their expenses (travel, etc.). Steve stated they have received \$25,000 from the Wilderness Society and Charitable Trust to help facilitate expenses associated with WPLI for the entire state of Wyoming. It is up to

individual counties whether they choose to use any of these funds or use their own funding. Steve stated travel and time amounts to approximately \$900 per session (6 hour meeting). He estimates two regular meetings and one site visit would be needed per individual site. He reviewed the Institute's input at the first WCCA meeting where WPLI was discussed and they currently facilitate WPLI meetings for both Sublette and Teton Counties. They drafted the model Charter and the document on how to arrive at consensus. They have worked with WCCA Natural Resources Attorney Gregory Cowen regarding collaboration. Students can be hired to work on information gathering, data, etc. Doug stated the County Commissioners set up a line item amount of \$500 for WPLI in the FY 2016-2017 budget, and if that funding is requested to be increased, a request will need to be presented to the County Commissioners (additional funding, what to be used for and funding request amount). Travis stated County funding for the facilitator is not available at this time and had a concern with funding sources as outlined by Steve, and he is not comfortable with asking for any of that funding. He recommended Fremont County work through the process on their own, and be able to defend decisions at the national level. Doug reviewed a list of "Duties of the Chair" he would like to insert into the Charter, and believes the Committee can move forward now; however, in the future may need the assistance of a facilitator. This can be part of the Charter wording.

Advisory Committee members commented: Reg reviewed his experience on the Forest Service Plan where a facilitator was used with good results, they ran the meeting and kept everybody on track. He does not have a problem with using the available funding Steve stated was available. Meetings would have to be longer (6 hours) to make the services feasible. Ginger stated information has already been gathered through the Resource Management and maybe a student could be hired to find data, etc. , she does not want to accept funding from outside interests. Reg stated in the situation he was familiar with, students collected information and compiled and presented in a readable format. Julie stated there is process vs. work, difficult issues to get started, option generation and brainstorming easy, making choices is the hard part.

Tabled Items:

Chairman: Doug drafted a "Duties of the Chair" list for the Committee to review.

Facilitator: Doug feels the wording under "Duties of the Chair", once added to the Charter, will provide clarification on his duties. At this time, a facilitator will not be hired. There are provisions in the Charter that state a facilitator can be hired later if deemed necessary by the Committee. Financial considerations will have to be taken into account for this to happen.

Finalize Charter: The Advisory Committee agreed the Duties of the Chair would be inserted into the Charter (#7). There will be also wording that at any time in the future, the option is open to secure the use of a facilitator (Page 6).

Future Meeting (Regular) | Commissioner Thompson

The next regular WPLI meeting is set for August 15, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. in the Commissioners Office. A doodle poll will be conducted to see what date (August 20 or 27, 2016) works best for the Committee members for the second site visit to Sweetwater Canyon. The third site visit in September will be the Dubois locations and October the Sweetwater Rocks area.

Discussion was held with moving the meetings around to other communities. Discussion was held regarding an Agenda topic at the next meeting to make an appointment for tribal representation at the table. If approved by the Committee, a formal request will be submitted to the Commissioners.

Public Comment |

Chamois Anderson, Wyoming Wilderness Federation: Also on behalf of the Wyoming Sportsman Alliance, recommended the Committee accept the Ruckelshaus Institute's offer as a facilitator. They bring science (optics very real), lend clout to process, operate a fair and transparent process that will be taken seriously by congress. There may be suspicion with a county facilitator.

Dick Inberg: Leaning towards a facilitator, if can't afford to do it right, maybe should quit the process.

Kim Wilbert: Recommends a facilitator, there is too much power with the chair vs. facilitator. They would provide an unbiased and fair piece of work.

Bill Bartlett: Appreciate the way these meetings are being conducted, being responsive to everybody.

Adjourned | *Commissioner Thompson*

Reg moved, Ginger seconded, to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.