

Fremont County WPLI Advisory Committee Minutes

FINAL

January 23, 2017 | 6:00 p.m. | Fremont County Commissioners Chambers

Meeting called by	Douglas L. Thompson, FCPLI Chairman	Advisory Committee: Travis Becker, Reg Phillips, Gary Horton, Rick Mickelsen, Ginger Bennett, Josh Milek, Nick Dobric, Andy Blair and Julia Stuble
Type of meeting	Regular	
Note taker	Amy Amack	Fremont County Commissioners: Larry Allen, Jennifer McCarty, and Clarence Thomas Public: Byrl & Helen Nichols, Camille Del Duca, Kim Wilbert, Paul Spitler (Wilderness Society), Jessi Johnson (Wyoming Sportsmen Alliance) Press: Daniel Bendtsen, Riverton Ranger Agency: Jared Oakleaf (BLM), Cody Booth (SLIB),

AGENDA TOPICS

Welcome | Chairman Doug Thompson

Doug welcomed everyone to the meeting and had Advisory Committee members and members of the public introduced themselves.

Approval of Agenda | Chairman Doug Thompson

Doug asked for approval of the Agenda. Julia asked if the mapping application that Teton County is using on their WPLI webpage could be added as well as her introducing a geospatial application created by the University of Wyoming. Doug would like to table the mapping application that Teton County is using until the committee could see it function. When talking with Gregory Cowan, Gregory had not met with Steve Smutko so at this time there is no one with working knowledge of the program to present it to the committee. Doug asked Julia to discuss the geospatial application during Recommendation Development. Travis moved, Ginger seconded, to approve the Agenda as amended. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Minutes | Chairman Doug Thompson

The minutes of the regular meeting held January 9th were reviewed. Josh requested that the following sentence be added to his presentation on Wyoming ORV and Snowmobile Recreation Reports. "Nick clarified that these activities are not allowed in the 'majority' of these areas." Julia requested typo errors to be corrected prior to being published on the website. Julia also suggested that the comment about Tin Cup and Long Creek Mountains being wilderness study areas in the Public Comment section was clarified that they are not Wilderness Study Areas (WSA's) at this time. Ginger asked that the statement be left in but changed to state, "They are not managed as WSA's." Reg requested that his statement in the New County Commissioner Orientation section, have the question mark removed from behind his name. As amended, the motion to approve the January 9th minutes carried unanimously.

New Commissioner Orientation | Chairman Doug Thompson

Doug introduced Jennifer McCarty as a newly elected commissioner in Fremont County. Joining the meeting at this time, Clarence Thomas as a newly elected commissioner as well. Doug welcomed the commissioners to the meeting as well as provided them each a packet with the committee's member contact list, information on each WSA located in Fremont County, and the committee's charter.

Doug brought specific attention to the purpose of the committee within the charter which states "The Fremont County Board of Commissioners has appointed the Fremont County WPLI Advisory Committee to conduct a collaborative review process of the WSA's and other potential land use interests in Fremont County. The Advisory Committee will develop and submit a proposed WSA management recommendation for the WSA's in the county, as well as any other areas for consideration to the Board of County Commissioners for approval. Once approved, the Wyoming County Commissioners Association (WCCA), in cooperation with the office of the Governor and the offices of the Wyoming Federal Delegation, will review the Advisory Committee recommendations and to the maximum extent practicable, include them in a legislative draft to be introduced in Congress. The Advisory Committee will have an opportunity to address any concerns or suggested changes raised during any part of the approval process."

This Advisory Committee was empowered under a previous commission. With two new commissioners, he felt it was important to have them attend a meeting since at some point this committee will be presenting to them a set of recommendations. He wanted them to be familiar with what the committee's purpose was and that the new commissioners understood their role in this process.

He then directed them to the website, "fcpli.com", as it has all the information provided to the commissioners at the meeting and is a great source for what the committee is working on. It is well maintained by Josh and the communications committee. Nick clarified that Fremont County has its own website as well as the Wyoming County Commissioners Association manages a website. There is good information on both, and some of it is overlapping information.

Jennifer asked if this was a two year study and Doug agreed that it was envisioned to be a two year study and hopes to be able to stay within this time frame. If a county enters into this process late or a county who can't come to a recommendation for a site, then this would slow down this process for all the other counties involved. Nick clarified that the time line at the county level is two years then it goes to the congressional delegation who then takes it on to Congress. Reg added that it's not totally out of our control, they can't amend anything without coming back to the Fremont County Commissioners. Travis also added that for any changes to be made to the committee's recommendations it has to first be presented to this committee. If this committee doesn't agree with the proposed changes to the recommendation then those changes will not occur and the recommendation will stand as it was written. So as these recommendations go on to Congress the control stays at the committee level.

Jennifer has attended several meetings prior to this one, visited the website, been following along with the progress the committee has made and is comfortable with the purpose of the WPLI. Doug wants the commissioners to always feel welcome to attend meetings and if the commission needs to touch base with the committee to please do so. Doug appreciated the input and thanked the Fremont County Commissioners for attending the meeting.

Recognition of Fremont County Plans & Profiles | Chairman Doug Thompson

Doug presented several documents that have been approved by the Fremont County Commission and have been accepted as filters for various activities in the resource management planning process and dealing with federal agencies. The commission adoption of the recommendations made by this committee will be in recognition of these documents that the commission has done in the past as economic profiles. Doug wanted to recognize and familiarize this committee with these documents as the committee has done in the past such as Josh's presentation on Wyoming ORV and Snowmobile Recreation Reports at the last meeting so they know that they have access to them and what they are.

The Fremont County Socio-Economic Profile by Tex Taylor thru the WCCA, published in August of 2015. It gives an updatable economic picture of the county. The opportunity to create one is available to every county in Wyoming but only Sublette and Fremont County Commissioners have theirs completed. The vision by the commission was to have this updated every four to five years so as to have data available for projects.

The Fremont County Natural Resource Plan was developed by a county citizen committee, approved by the Fremont County Commission and published in 2004. It provides a foundation for land use planning during the federal process with information and about economic supports in Fremont County. Travis added this can be found online at the Fremont County website: fremontcountywy.org. Doug added that this document may be dated but is more in-depth in some areas than the Socio-Economic Profile.

The Economic Analysis of Fremont County Economy: Past, Present and Future was developed previous to 2000. It also has an economic profile of the county.

The Economic Importance of Livestock Grazing on BLM in Fremont County by Tex Taylor, published in 2004. It is site specific and will help with answering livestock grazing questions such as quantifying what an AUM is worth in Fremont County.

Ginger asked that these documents be scanned and available on the FCPLI website. Doug liked the idea except for the pre-2000 document, because it is so large and the information is dated. Julia was concerned whether the committee should use the documents published in 2004 and if those documents need to be updated before the committee references them. Doug wanted to bring these documents to the committee's attention because these are potentially the documents the Fremont County Commission may use as references when the committee presents the site recommendations to the commission.

Recommendation Development | *Chairman Doug Thompson*

Doug wanted to remind everyone that the purpose of this committee is to develop draft recommendations and that this particular activity is not a public participation process, but the whole FCPLI is open to the public. If there are constituents that would like to have input on this process they can contact the committee member who represents their interest group and use them as a liaison to effectively bring that information to the attention of the committee. They could also make comments during public comment at the end of a meeting but Doug suggested that it would be more orderly to go through their liaison in working this process.

Doug explained the steps he foresees the committee taking to ensure the public is involved and well informed of the development of these recommendations. Once a recommendation becomes a working document, it will be available on the website through the entire process. When a recommendation is drafted then a public hearing will be held. Reg asked how the online and public comments from the public will be brought into this process. Josh responded that they could package the completed site forms and email them to the members of the committee so everyone can see them on their own terms. Then if somebody wants to address one of those comments during our meeting it can be done. Julia added she is picturing a living document of public comments per site and a general category as well as add the ones from the meetings. Have comments as a shared Google Doc for us would be a good thing. Julia would like to make the Google Doc viewable to the public as well so they could see what's happening and a link to the website as well. Just in case there is a lot going on behind the scenes. Ginger added that one of the abilities within Google Doc is Google Earth where we can geo reference the sites into the Google Doc.

Doug would like to see the committee use the Google applications throughout this process. Possibly a Google Doc that can be shared and commented on by the members of this committee but the only ones that can edit is Doug or Amy. When the committee works on a recommendation, the document can be populated with information. This will still be a draft document but allows the members to comment as much as they want.

Then the committee will discuss the comments at the next meeting. If agreed upon then that's what would be stated for that subject for right now.

As Reg brought up at the last meeting when we leave one of these meeting or stop work on a recommendation that this isn't the final of the recommendation. As agreed upon the recommendations won't be finalized until the committee has the full package. So when we leave a meeting with one of these in draft, we will keep that for our records. Then when we work on that recommendation again, we will bring the draft from the last meeting, then look at the comments from the committee or from the public and incorporate them into the next draft of the recommendation. Not having done this process before we will have to troubleshoot as we go along.

After much discussion of how much would be available on the website in these early stages of drafting a recommendation, the committee agreed to first talk about the comments at the meeting and have it agreed upon before making a draft available on the website. That way the public is seeing a working document not just ideas which could be cumbersome to read but an actual decision on that subject made by the committee at a meeting which is open to the public.

Doug wanted the committee to look at the Recommendation Outline and would like to leave this meeting with a starting point to this process. Reg agrees and thinks the committee is on the right track but changes may have to occur along the way so it's a more viable product. Doug would like to see the committee populate the outline by inserting their own description or reference documents such as from an agency. Gary commented that we need to reference this document and only use it if it is in line with the views of this committee. Doug agreed with Gary, for that document to be used the committee has to make a decision at a meeting to use that document because on occasion the agencies have been wrong or don't share the same views as this committee.

Doug began to present the draft recommendation outline to the committee. First off we have our "Site Name." We have to remember our audience who will be reading this. "Location" both general and legal description, especially if lawyers start to look at it. "Size" which is acreage of the site and this has importance because there was a size criteria attached originally to each WSA. "General Description" being used from the WSA document for this site and enhance it with our comments and information. If we have a descriptive narrative from any committee member or public comment that is unique and special we can use it. "Unique Geological Features" and "Unique Plant Communities" are where information for touch points of the landscapes that trigger the protective concerns of the agencies.

Reg commented he would like to see the committee use accepted peer reviewed data from a state or federal agencies or universities so that we have some check back on all of this. So if it is questioned we can say it came from a specific agency or university study. Ginger commented from her and her constituents' standpoint this may not always be the case. Representing the general public isn't a scientific process because there are a lot of feelings that go into what we are doing and it bears merit to definitely consider both sides. Doug stated this will be a committee process where the committee decides what will be stated in each of these categories. He agrees with Reg that the more citations we have the better because personal opinion is harder to defend before Congress. Now personal observations can carry more weight. Probably where we will get into the personal opinions is when we get into importance and relevance. That's probably where our major discussion will be.

Next categories discussed were "Threatened or Endangered Species," "Wildlife," and "Fisheries." Doug thought wildlife numbers from an agency study would work here. Reg commented that for the purposes of this committee he sees us using the data that would come out of the US Fish and Wildlife Service, Wyoming Game and Fish, or agency management plans.

Doug stated from the site visits the only WSA that has a road going through it is Sweetwater Canyon, which is officially grandfathered in. For the "Roads" category is separated it into two subcategories: "Internal" and "External." Copper Mountain has a county road that runs right along the east side of it so if this committee would potentially expand the WSA or expand the recommendation across that, it would affect these exterior roads. Julia commented that the committee should refer to Rick Vand Voet's presentation on ways and routes on BLM. She remembers that there were different characterization of two tracks, and whether it was ever constructed and maintained. Doug thought there may be the possibility of an RS2477 recognized route.

Josh suggested there should be another category that could go below "Roads" would be "Trails." Then subcategories of non-motorized and motorized if they were there. Discussion about non-motorized and motorized then occurred and it was decided not to have these subcategories added here but to leave them listed under "Current Uses and Activities." Doug asked if there is a way to recognize any official trail and not a user made trail. In these WSA's these are non-motorized trails that are existing and being used. The Dubois Badlands has specific hiking trails that people have created. Trails recognized by the BLM should be listed here and use the same recognition standards we are using for roads. Julia added it should be all the trails in a WSA so as to promote those trail systems because it represents an opportunity for use and indicates recreational use that this area is receiving. Whether or not we call it wilderness or something else, there is opportunity we can enhance some trail systems or that there could be trail systems there. So there should be recognition that there are good trails there or there is not but there could be.

Jared Oakleaf from the BLM stated that currently motorized vehicles are allowed on those motorized routes that existed during and before the inventory phase of the WSA. Sweetwater Canyon has some of those motorized routes as well as Sweetwater Rocks. The BLM does not recognize any trails in WSA's because of the maintenance issue. Since they do not do active maintenance or construction therefore they are not formally recognized as trails. BLM knows for instance the Dubois Badlands has a substantial network of game and cattle trails being followed by recreation. As well as trails being beaten into existence by people going where people want to go. Doug sees a value when we come to the recommendation part if there are heavier used trails and our recommendation is to make that an opportunity for non-motorized recreation or even motorized if it agreed upon by this committee for example the west end of the Dubois Badlands where as of now there is a lot of illegal use and you will see that category down under "Current Uses and Activities." Maybe we want to recommend there be a loop trail in there for that purpose.

Doug asked for comments about adding the category "Trails" after "Roads." Ginger thought instead of just denoting as trails maybe we need to put in for other things. Maybe its going to be rock hounding or rock climbing such as out at Sweetwater Rocks. Reg was concerned where possible historical trails for the westward movement were going to be located in the outline. They may be present at Sweetwater Rocks. Julia suggested that a whole category we should add is Historical/Cultural. Gary stated that there was a lot of interest when we began this process with Jason Baldes and a couple other people being interested in what we are doing in respect to the local Indian tribes. This information needs to go somewhere on this outline. We need to give them an opportunity to provide this information within a certain amount of time. Andy suggested placing Native American historical assets under a Historical/Cultural category. Doug agrees to add a major category of "Cultural". We have "History" and that is looking at the formal process of it becoming a WSA. The "Cultural" category could be multifaceted and be a major category. Then populate it with the above information.

Nick stated there are adjacent management constraints and concerns. Put "Tribal" under cultural. Not only cultural resources but adjacent land owners that need to be recognized. It was decided to put "Tribal" under "Adjacent Management Constraints/Concerns." Reg added especially if they were to suggest loop trails to

keep into account who the adjacent landowners are. Doug stated it would especially come into play if the committee decided to extend a boundary of one of these sites.

Doug asked Jared if he knew of any "Private or State inholdings." Jared stated the only site that has an inholding is the Split Rock WSA of the Sweetwater Rocks Complex which is private land inholding by the Split Rock Ranch and that is the only one.

Doug started discussion on the category of "History." This category is how it came to be a WSA and the rationale, we have a BLM book and in it is a short description of how it got there. That doesn't have to be the end all but we have to have some frame of reference of why it even got there in the first place. Now in the Lander Resource Management Plan (RMP), there are several places where there are guidance for what is going on in and around those WSA's. This will be important when we look at the surrounding areas, such as Federal because around each WSA there is a lot of BLM ground that has management constraints reflected in the Lander RMP which needs to be recognized as well. Just to make sure our recommendation is manageable. Travis stated through this process in essence we are guiding and telling the BLM how it is going to be managed so if Congress comes back and accepts our recommendation and now you have expanded that management style out beyond the WSA. Travis stated he doesn't want the recommendation to be constrained by the RMP. Doug stated he just wants it to be recognized as what is going on outside the WSA and understand that they are there and what is recommended within the boundaries of the WSA will have an effect on the landowners for example on those around Sweetwater Rocks. What this committee recommends there will have some effect on adjacent lands and landowners. If and when this is accepted by Congress the BLM still has to manage it. We have the ability to make any recommendation we want but the reality is if our recommendation is so extreme that it doesn't work well with the adjacent land management plans it may be harder to receive approval of it. So we need to recognize what's going on around there in an informative manner but not to constrain or drive our recommendation.

Doug stated Reg brought up a good point about how to quantify uses. How are we going to quantify the importance and relevance of a use. The BLM has worksheets that help to quantify values. For example, livestock grazing if we say in this area we are going to recommend there be no livestock grazing we are going to eliminate 300 AUMs we could go to that document, making sure its up to date with Tex, it states that's going to cost the county about x amount of dollars in lost revenue. Or this has potential for mining. Or this activity not happen there it could have this effect and be given this market value. But there are a lot of non-market value activities that are very difficult to put a price on like nonuse, wilderness, and solitude. Those types of things are very difficult to quantify. So I hope we don't get into having to have a dollar sign in front of everything because some of these things will be our thoughts. So I have been trying to think about how to do this and Jared did offer some templates that they have for up there and I will be visiting with him as we go along. But I see that as a potential quagmire if we get hung up in that. We do have to document some significance and economic value. But there are going to be some that are going to be pretty tough to put dollars on. Andy stated he feels they need to go along with already developed decision making plans instead of trying to reinvent the wheel.

Rick has an email about March 23rd workshop, Lander 2, and thinks its discussion and workshops may help put values on these issues. Doug stated Gregory is trying to work that into the workshop, this is where the other committees are too. So he is trying to get broad based discussion about this and he is concerned about the ability to aggregate eight counties especially if the tools are different it will be tough. But this committee's purpose and responsibility will be here in Fremont County. How ever we work this out, hopefully we get some commonality throughout the whole system.

The next category for discussion was "Current Uses and Activities." Doug stated he added the uses represented by the committee members. When looking at the Dubois Badlands for instance some of these

places have motorized encroachments. We need to write that down because I think it might be a factor on our recommendation. If there is an illegal use or encroachments the agency may be having difficulty managing the area under the current constraints. We are not advocating any illegal use in there but we need to make note of that in our inventory and information gathering. Also if there is a use that comes out in public comment or committee comment we can put it under this category.

Doug continued category discussion with "Adjacent Land Status" and "Adjacent Land Uses" which is referring to who has the land, such as a lander owner or BLM also what's around these areas. "Adjacent Management Constraints/Concerns" is the category we would list the illegal encroachment in Dubois. This would probably be a management constraint. BLM not fixing the fence around Sweetwater Rocks would be a management concern expressed by the private landowners adjacent to that. So this would be the place we could weave these into this recommendation outline. Ginger would like access addressed with "Adjacent Management Constraints/Concerns." Doug thought it could be addressed under Adjacent Management Constraints/concerns under the subcategory "Private" instead of making a new category.

The next category for discussion was "Potential Uses" which Doug suggested would be populated by site with a value of high, moderate, or low in regards to significance and value to the site. Doug used an example of oil and gas potential. All of these areas within the Lander RMP have a high to low type of potential. It's important that we recognize that the potential the BLM assigns to an area may or may not be correct, but that doesn't mean we have to agree. Another example is the geological information for the Sweetwater Rocks. Each site needs to be thoroughly researched so as to have no bones of contention that we would wrestle with later. Julia likes the weighing of what's there with what could be there.

Julia presented on the website WYGISC, developed by the University of Wyoming, <http://wpli.wygisc.org/> It is an interactive state mapping platform for WPLI. They have assembled layers such as WSA, sage grouse core, grazing allotments, and wild horse management areas to help the committee in the recommendation process. A classic list of public land uses are on there too so we see how they interact. For example we can look at Copper Mountain to see if there is a mining withdrawal or gravel mining and see how that interacts with the mule deer habitat in that region. It could be used as an informational tool for the WSA's to answer some of these questions we have and to double check things such as if that's crucial winter range to consider. The committee could look at this together on the screen and a link will go on the website. Doug thinks it could be a useful tool and likes the capabilities of this tool.

Doug stated that in the Recommendation our job to give each site "Management Directions." The Lander RMP Record#7032 states that in the event Congress releases any of the Lander field office WSA's without management direction, the BLM will manage those released areas under the direction detailed in the RMP, and current inventories, guidance, and new relevant information. If we want to direct the management then it will be necessary that we put management directions in there.

The subcategory of "Release- Hard or Soft" was next to be discussed. Discussion about it ensued. Doug stated according to BLM, Hard release is "full and permanent release for multiple use management without further restrictions or evaluation of the area's wilderness characteristics." In other words, the BLM would not be able to re-evaluate the area for wilderness characteristics or for any potential wilderness-type restrictions. Soft release means "the area would be released from management as a WSA, it would be managed for multiple use, but consideration of the area's wilderness or other resource characteristics would be allowed in the future. The agency would be allowed to consider protection of special values of the area in future land use planning processes." Julia stated hard release is really rare in legislation because it is absolutely final. Doug stated in the document, Management of WSA's, it has all the descriptions of management of wilderness. We may end up looking at some of those to define our recommendation so as if we do this or call it this, this is the way this site would be managed and the constraints are appropriate or not appropriate

based off our final recommendation. Nick suggests since release would be a type of classification as well as other designations that the category "Release- hard or soft" be changed to read "Release language" and be a subcategory to "Management Directions." The committee agreed.

Nick said that the RMP says that until the next revision of the RMP the BLM will manage the WSA as directed in the RMP. So until they go back and revise the RMP or have Congressional management direction it will be managed as a WSA. Doug thinks that the provision there is if Congress releases it to something else and there are no management directions then they will management according to their inventories and such until the next RMP process. If we say we recommend the Sweetwater Rocks be a managed recreation area with these things happening in there and have a hard release. It would mean that subsequent planning processes are not going to change that compared to a soft release. Jared stated the intent of that management action is because they are required by law to have planning on every acre the BLM manages. If it is released back to us without management direction, the BLM will use its data to guide management; or start a plan amendment. This would be a public process similar the one we are going through right now and generate management recommendations for it. Planning starts immediately once it comes to the BLM with no direction. The BLM can't change Congress's decision even if a new land use plan is done. Once Congress gives BLM direction such as a soft release from a WSA. If it comes from this committee and you give it a different type of direction than the BLM land use plan, we have no capability to change that as a federal agency. We have to follow what Congress tells us. So it is an important stage to be specific with management recommendations. Doug stated that this underlines the importance of our management direction responsibility.

Nick moved on to the "Classification" category by stating we have three options of classification on the table: we designate it as wilderness, we release it or have it another designation such as some sort of recommendation. Reg asked what a good classification would be. Julia stated there is a host of classifications within the National Conservation Lands such as a national conservation area. Reg thought where the confusion is for Nick is classification is going to be different then a release or a recommendation. Julia stated we are going to release it or we are going to call it something else and direct management for it based off that decision. When we make a recommendation we are releasing the sites from WSA status and "Classification" would be providing the next step of how we want it classified and managed. If classified as Wilderness then it has to be managed one way. Otherwise you have a lot of possibilities of how it is classified and managed. Doug stated we need to remember if we recommend that a site become wilderness, there are management options that open up because then you move away from non-impairment status. There are still more significant constraints than some other classes but the wilderness guidance allows some things. Gary stated we are releasing it is from the WSA, that is our primary goal.

Doug then moved on to the next categories of "Cost-" which has two subcategories: "Management" and "Economic," and the category "Benefit-" which has three subcategories: "Management," "Economic," and "Social." The benefit analysis will be a tool the commissioners use to evaluate this committee's decision so it has been added to the outline. It will be important to provide numbers for the cost to manage whatever we recommend and potential cost to the economy. There will be benefits in management and benefits to the economy. Social benefit is to be used for the non- use areas since they are harder to quantify but they need to be recognized. Doug gave theoretical examples. Economic benefit would be good to have for Whiskey Mountain and Dubois Badlands as it could benefit the economy's future the local communities. Having access to the sheep herds, they could advertise access and viewing. NOLS has an economic interest in Sweetwater Rocks, if that access would go away then that would be a cost to NOLS. We need to recognize what we are recommending will have benefits and costs. If we recommend the BLM maintain the trail going down through the Sweetwater Canyon and they do not have the money, it won't happen. Or recommend putting in a kiosk outside the WSA. These things need to be part of our discussion. Julia asked if this would be a narrative acknowledgement or if we would ask Tex Taylor to crunch these numbers for them. Doug

stated if it's appropriate but doesn't think they need to spend 1000s of dollars to have Tex Taylor provide numbers when a narrative could be used.

Ginger suggested adding private partnerships because there are a lot of entities, even sitting here at this table who wouldn't mind putting some skin in the game. Doug thought it could be put under the "Benefit-" in the "Recommendation" section. Travis thought partnerships could be government to government such as state lands we are talking about that trail just off of Kingfisher going into the state lands. May be there is a way to hook into that. Doug agreed the subcategory "Partnerships" under "Benefit-" should be added. We have been looking at this in a WSA focus. We have no clue what some group will come to this table with. We will probably need all these components. But there is going to be a federal private problem out there and maybe state federal like this Lander Slope exchange. It doesn't fit neatly into this package but I think a lot of the things we are talking about will need to be recognized and documented.

Julia asked where do we collate the comments from the public so there is documentation as we make this recommendation this is what we received. Doug suggested two possibilities: one we could put public comment into a folder or two we can take those comments and reference them within the final recommendation document. Gary would prefer for the clarity of reading the final recommendation document that those public comments be referenced in a folder because that may get confusing to the reader. We are going to have an executive summary of some kind and the people are going to read that and not the entire recommendation. If we can come up with something simple that they could look at we would be better off but we do need to include them. Julia was thinking an appendix then these narratives could be fleshed out and we can be informed by them. Doug asked Julia do we want public comment separated into two classes: one for the informative portion and the other for the public comment on the recommendation portion and keep them in a folder and we can reference them in there or have them all in one piece. Reg thought the site visit was going to be one folder so these public comments would be on the site, a spot within the site, or past history forming as the first part then the recommendation comments would be another document. So he suggests two folders. Doug thought because we have a draft recommendation to show the public, we will need to have the public comments on that recommendation be included in the final recommendation document. It will be public comment that informs, supports or modifies our decision for the final recommendation. So at this time, under each category let's put "Public Comment."

Travis thinks we have covered as much as we possibly can until we start delving into a site. As soon as we start, some of this might go away or we may add two more pages. We have a blueprint and we should go forward with it. He likes where we are at and thinks this is where we should start. Nick agrees with Travis and thinks it will be helpful to keep it elastic.

Doug suggested to move forward in this process we would take draft off the recommendation outline and put Copper Mountain there. Andy would like to put this into a Google Form using the topic headings as the questions that we could fill in individually and once submitted would populate a spreadsheet that would identify the commenter, date time it, and would collect everyone's answers into their own individual cells per question on a spreadsheet. Then the committee could view all the comments together across a spreadsheet rather than in a Google Doc with track changes. With all of us editing a Google Doc the track changes can get pretty daunting to digest. Julia agreed a Google Form would be easier and we will have collected all of the information instead of a messy Google word document. Doug asked if Andy was able to meet this week to go over this more in depth. It was decided that Doug, Andy, Julia, and Amy would meet later in the week to go over the Google Form to test it and see how it populates the spreadsheet.

Josh asked if the descriptions provided by the BLM with site information would be populated on the Google Form prior to it being sent out to the committee members. Doug would like to leave each category or question on the Google Form blank so if everyone wants to use the BLM site information they can state that in

the answer area under the "Description" category to show we all agree that's what it should be. Doug wants to leave the most creativity potential to this committee. If we start putting things into the Google Form then respond to it instead of just collecting people's thoughts then it is directed by already created information. Doug suggests that the members of the committee populate all the categories and reference the source. The purpose of this form is for you to make known to the committee what information you find most valuable and would like to see documented in this recommendation. Julia thinks we should go do some homework and fill in what we know. Then when the committee looks at the spreadsheet at the next meeting and sees there is nothing under "Threatened and Endangered Species" then we know that's something we need to do research on for our next meeting. This is a work in progress and this way we will know where the gaps are. Julia recommended that the "Recommendation" portion of the outline be left off since we are just gathering information. Doug agreed with Julia that Recommendation and below on this outline would not be included in the Google Form at this time. Gary would like to see that we have the spreadsheet projected up on the overhead screen so we can pick and choose what we want to be left on the form. If it takes us five meetings to do Copper Mountain then that is what it takes. This process should not be rushed. We go down the list, once we are done with a category and are in agreement with what it says we move on one step at a time and work through the outline. Andy thought he heard Doug say earlier on was that yes we would go through each one of the sites and try to come to consensus but it would still remain in draft stage until we get it packaged right. Doug likes that we have the capability and are going to work these Google Forms between meetings. We don't have to have five drafts of Copper Mountain before we look at anything else. We can start to look at the other sites and populate those Google Forms too once we get our process fine-tuned on the first one. Doug was going to visit with Andy about the Google Form, Amy about using the projection screen for the next meeting and Jared about the evaluation release language and inventory information from the BLM. Jared agreed.

Commissioner Larry Allen is concerned about the management criteria being enforced since he has experienced firsthand, management practices that have not be followed by the Forest Service on their forest service allotment. The Forest Service has now recognized that they can't afford to do the management practices that the group has recommended. For example, at the Sweetwater Canyon, the agency is not fixing the fences as they are supposed to, how is that supposed to be enforced whether it be fences or trails. Doug stated all the committee can do is provide Congress with a recommendation, we need to have cost of management recognized and if its significant than that will be a factor. Doug would like to see the focus be on what is the best for the landscape and have Congress tell the agencies how to manage it. Larry is also concerned that the landowners will get upset since the BLM is not enforcing their own management practices recommended by this committee or per their agreement then the landowner closes off this site to the public regardless of your recommendation making this committee's work all for nothing and the time spent to create the recommendation, a waste. Your time is worth something, it's valuable too. The BLM has to understand the management criteria if it is approved by Congress has to be done whether they are funded or not. Doug thought this question may be better asked of Travis McNiven about how much the management practices can be enforced. Larry is also concerned that this committee spends two to three years of effort then Congress decides to go in a different direction such as go back to the management practices of the BLM and the committee can do nothing about it. Travis added that there is no guarantee when we are done that anything we have done will be implemented by Congress. We are hoping that they will and our delegates have said they will push it, but again there is no guarantee.

Nick thinks their goal here is to keep it relatively simplistic. What we can control is releasing or another designation of WSA. That's what is in our control and can legislate. The more we go down the path of "you have to do this or that," the more we will be spinning our wheels. He advised that we do something that is pliable. Nick also recommended reviewing past successful legislative bills like White Pine County in Nevada

has passed a similar package. Washington County in Utah and Owyhee County in Idaho have done the same. Their approach is broad scale and it may be useful if we would take a look at these because it is what we are shooting for. These are pieces of legislation that have passed Congress under different administrations and different Congress'. This is a path of success because the more we try to tell the BLM how to do this and that for every road, the more we are backtracking. What is in our control is legislative action that way we avoid the concerns Larry brought up, which are valid concerns. Doug thought this will be part of our complexity. How in-depth do we want to get, do we want to try and recommend these more minute details to make it fly or can we put a provision in there that we can take out if it becomes an obstruction to the process. Doug doesn't want to micromanage this, we have better things to do. All of these thoughts will be part of our discussion.

Public Comment | Audience

Jessi Johnson of Sportsmen's Alliance congratulated the committee and thought they were looking very broad spectrum and its been very inclusive and appreciates that very much. She agrees that hard release would be a poison pill. Travis McNiven talked about it from Barrasso's office and his recommendation to steer clear of it as well. She appreciates how broad the committee is thinking and really enjoys the discussion that is happening.

Next Meeting, Committee Comments and Adjournment | Chairman Doug Thompson

Doug set the next meeting for Monday, February 27th at 6 pm. Since there will be work between meetings by populating the Google Forms, a monthly meeting should continue to be appropriate. Meetings are on the fourth Monday of the month so the next meeting will be on February 27th at 6 pm at the County Commissioners Chambers.

Nick asked about the Lander 2 meeting. Doug stated that it was a WCCA workshop and a continuation of the Lander 1 meeting. There is an agenda and it talks about what other counties are doing, workshops and training for members. It will be here at the Lander Community Center, the committee is welcome to attend. Reg stated the meeting is March 23rd. Gregory sent out an email about it and a link to register. Julia is looking forward to the meeting. The first workshop was incredibly informative and could share with them what we are doing.

There being no further business, Reg moved, Gary seconded, to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 p.m.