

CARBON COUNTY - WY PUBLIC LANDS INITIATIVE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
OFFICIAL MINUTES
NOVEMBER 29, 2016
RAWLINS BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT FIELD OFFICE

Chairman John Espy called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and present were members John Espy, John Johnson, Dave Throgmorton, Shaleas Harrison, Joe Parsons, Jeb Steward, Jerold "Pat" Rollison, Glen Alameda, and Joan McGraw as well as Connie Wilbert via telephone. Absent was Jeff Streeter.

Also present were Dennis Carpenter, BLM Field Manager; Gwynn Bartlett, Carbon County Clerk; Leo Chapman, Carbon County Commissioner; Holly Kennedy, Farm Bureau; Stephanie Kessler WY Outdoor Council.

OVERVIEW OF PROCESS

Dennis said the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) was present to support the process and provide information. He said the BLM provided an inventory of lands years ago and out of that study prepared a report. He distributed a sampling of that report titled *WY Statewide Wilderness Study Report Wilderness Study Area Specific Recommendations* which was dispersed at the meeting. This document contains excerpts of the full report previously released and has sections for each of the four wilderness study areas in the county that this group will consider including the Ferris Mountains, Encampment River Canyon, Prospect Mountain, and Bennett Mountain. Dennis explained that any designation changes this group recommends will require a land use plan amendment.

According to Dennis some of the more common designations that could be made are Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC), mining, open to motorized vehicles but kept on designated roads, keep closed to various types of transportation, a backcountry designation which is new, and these are designated during the public planning process. The first order is to get Congress to act on recommendations to remove areas from the wilderness status into something else. An amendment to the Land Use Plan would be required and is a lengthy process, approximately 5-10 years with numerous opportunities for public input.

John E. reported the purpose of the exercise for this group is to include its recommendations along with other groups in WY then send as a package to Senator Barrasso's office for legislation to Congress. The goal would be to obtain buy-in from various groups so there is not strong opposition when legislation is considered and that all committee's in the state would produce recommendations at the same time to produce one piece of legislation. John E. explained the WY County Commissioner's Website has a great deal of information and suggested members visit that site.

Dennis said this is the opportunity for local individuals to help determine what the management of these areas should look like and if it is determined it should not be wilderness then the group must make recommendations of what the designations should be.

CHARTER & FACILITATION

John E. passed out Park County's Charter and asked each member to review this noting this group must develop their own. There was lengthy discussion on whether or facilitation was desired noting there are limited funds for this and John E. recommended only using this when needed, likely later down the road.

Connie felt that a facilitator in the beginning is very important to ensure success by starting the group on the right foot. She said for a diverse group such as this to balance the value of wilderness with the other potential uses of the landscape may be difficult without someone to facilitate those early conversations, build trust and possibly bring the group together from the start. She felt even 1 or 2 meetings may be all that need facilitation. Dave agreed as did Shaleas who said she would like one especially in the beginning especially if funds are available now.

Joe thought the group could move forward without a facilitator and if the group got stuck one could be used. Joan, Glen, Pat, John J. agreed with Joe's thoughts. Jeb agreed adding that he thought the recommendations must sustain scrutiny and the process is in danger of being "hijacked" by a facilitator.

After an informal vote where the majority voted not to not have a facilitator, John E. decided that there were some members that seemed apprehensive moving forward therefore said he will have the next meeting facilitated.

CO-CHAIR

John E. suggested a co-chair be designated.

John J. moved to designate Dave Throgmorton as the co-chair. Jeb seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Connie suggested the group discuss allowing alternate members to be designated. If approved, the concept would be addressed in the charter noting the commissioners would have final say but likely after a vote by the committee. Stephanie from the WY Outdoor Council stated she is monitoring the process statewide and alternates can be helpful.

Holly with the Farm Bureau suggested if alternate positions are going to be filled the process should start as the original process did with advertising for interested individuals to serve. She and Stephanie both offered their assistance in getting the word out if the committee opted to move forward.

There was further discussion of the need for alternates, the fact they may need to attend all meetings, how they would be chosen, however no decision was made.

Connie also suggested the group may want to consider adding additional members to ensure all interests were represented. Joe suggested the group likely doesn't have enough information to know if they need additional involvement or members and that could be considered later. He also suggested the charter address that additional members or advisory individuals could come into the group later if the group realizes there is a need. There was also discussion of having subcommittee addressed in the charter to work on specific tasks.

John E. asked each member to review other charters and come to the next meeting with suggestions and be ready to work on a charter for Carbon County.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Stephanie said the local BLM director did not fully disclose what needs considered. He only mentioned BLM bureaucratic designations. She feels like there are many congressional designations the group can learn about like national recreation or conservation areas or that parameters and designations can be made up by the group for management. She stressed the group is not confined to the BLM's predetermined designations and not to be concerned with a land use plan amendment. She also encouraged the group to invite Travis McNiven, Barrasso's Natural Resources Advisor and Pete Obermuller from WCCA to overview the broad range of designations available.

Holly reiterated Stephanie's thoughts adding there is no one size fits all approach. The group can also look at current wilderness areas and tailor those to fit today's needs. She encouraged this group to have representation for timber/logging in the future. Finally she mentioned the Fremont County group had a BLM representative present at their meeting and suggested having that individual attend a future meeting.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting was tentatively scheduled for January 30 at 9 a.m. at the BLM Office in Rawlins noting John E. will determine if a facilitator is available. Joe offered to contact local individuals who have been through training to facilitate as well so the group has backup facilitators.

John J. moved to adjourn at 11:07 a.m. Joe seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Approved: (Date) _____

John Espy, Chairman: _____