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WYOMING PUBLIC LANDS INITIATIVE  
Sublette County Advisory Committee Official Minutes

Pinedale, Wyoming  
September 7, 2016

A regularly scheduled meeting of the Wyoming Public Lands Initiative, Sublette County Advisory Committee, was held in the Sheriff's Department Training Room at the County Courthouse on this date. Committee members present were Co-Chairmen Dan Smitherman and Coke Landers, and committee members Bill Lanning, Mike Crosson, Mike Smith, Mike Henn, Dave Bell and Monte Skinner. Steve Smutko and Jessica Western were present to represent the Ruckelshaus Institute. Sublette County Planning Director Bart Myers was present to represent the Sublette County Board of County Commissioners.

Co-Chairman Smitherman called the meeting to order at 1:08 PM and welcomed everyone in attendance. Co-Chairman Smitherman asked Committee member Dave Bell to introduce himself and provide a brief background of his experience and interest in natural resource issues, as Mr. Bell was absent from the last meeting. After Mr. Bell's introduction, Co-Chairman Smitherman moved to the first agenda item entitled "Old Business". The committee briefly discussed the minutes from the August 22, 2016 meeting, noting several typographical errors. Posting the draft minutes of Advisory Committee meeting minutes on the Wyoming County Commissioners Association website was discussed, with the committee asking Planning Director Myers to not post draft minutes on the County Commissioners Association website and to only post the approved minutes. The committee had no substantial changes to the minutes and voted 8-0 to accept the minutes as presented.

Co-Chairmen Smitherman and Landers then asked Steve Smutko to continue with the charter review from the August meeting. Mr. Smutko began by giving a brief overview of the changes incorporated into the charter at the August meeting. Committee member Crosson asked that his membership category be re-worded to state "Sportsman" rather than "Hunting/Fishing". Co-Chairman Smitherman asked that his membership category be re-worded to reflect his representation of "Conservation" rather than "Environmental/Conservation". Mr. Smutko began the charter review, starting with the chapter devoted to the role of the co-chairmen. Discussion included the addition of a section entitled "Responsibilities of Facilitators and County Staff". The committee added language assigning meeting and site visit logistics, as well as advertising, to County Planning Director Myers. Committee member Bell asked about the consensus decision-making process and what happens if the co-chairs do not agree. The committee discussed the role of the co-chairs being more or less just to run the meeting. The committee did not believe that the co-chairs not being in agreement would be an issue when it came to using the consensus decision-making process in making recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners.

The next chapter of the charter reviewed and discussed was entitled "Ad Hoc Committees". The Advisory Committee was in agreement on changing the title to "Sub-Committees". Committee member Bell asked if the sub-committees would be composed of all outside representation or if a member of the Advisory Committee would be assigned to sub-committees. Committee member Henn stated that in his experience the sub-committee(s) should be chaired by an Advisory Committee member. The committee

amended the charter to state that sub-committees would be appointed by the Advisory Committee and that each sub-committee would be chaired by an Advisory Committee member. The committee discussed how to incorporate decisions and recommendations of a sub-committee into the final recommendation of the Advisory Committee.

“Ground Rules for Interaction” was the next chapter from the charter discussed. The committee was in agreement with replacing “Ground Rules” with “Guidelines”. The committee made minor changes to the guidelines contained in the draft charter presented by Mr. Smutko.

The committee moved to the next chapter of the charter entitled “Public Participation at Group Meetings”. The committee briefly discussed what would constitute unruly behavior. The committee then discussed posting information to the Wyoming County Commissioners Association website, including what gets posted. Discussion centered on posting draft recommendations vs. the final version of work compiled by the committee. The committee clarified language from the charter addressing the committee recommendation that is sent to the Board of County Commissioners being a final or draft recommendation. The committee removed the word draft from the charter, as pertaining to the committee recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners. The committee next discussed getting draft recommendation(s) out for public comment prior to developing a final recommendation to present to the Board of County Commissioners. Exact language to be incorporated into the charter addressing these items will be developed by Mr. Smutko.

The next chapter reviewed was entitled “Working with the Media”. The committee discussed when to comment to the media. This discussion included commenting only during meetings or reaching out to the media when the committee feels the need to make something public. County Planning Director Myers was instructed to send the approved meeting minutes and agendas to all local media outlets. The committee made minor changes to the language regarding talking points and media releases contained in the draft charter.

“Schedule and Duration” was the next chapter from the charter addressed by the committee. The committee affirmed that regular meetings would be held the first Wednesday of every month at locations determined by the Co-Chairmen. The committee discussed the ability to schedule additional meetings if required.

The final two chapters of the charter reviewed are entitled “Amendments to the Charter” and “Signatories to the Charter”. There were no changes to the chapter addressing amendments and it was decided that all committee members would sign the charter. The final version of the charter will be completed by the next committee meeting. The committee briefly discussed public record requirements and decided that County Planning Director Myers would be the custodian of committee records. Committee member Crosson offered to research public records requirements that may pertain to the committee.

After a brief break, Co-Chairmen Smitherman and Landers asked for public comment on the review and discussions of the charter. Stephanie Kessler of the Wyoming Outdoor Council stated the committee needs to constantly make sure information is available to the public, including background information. Ms. Kessler stated the charter agreed to by the committee addresses her concerns. Ms. Kessler concluded by asking that more information regarding the committee be made available on the County

website, with County Planning Director Myers agreeing to keep the County website updated with respect to committee activities.

The committee next discussed review of the minutes, with Co-Chair Smitherman reminding committee members that it was agreed the minutes would be approved by email and asking committee members to be timely in reviewing and approving the minutes, making sure to reply to all members when doing so.

Retaining the services of the Ruckelshaus Institute was next discussed. The committee supported keeping Ruckelshaus on board throughout the process. County Planning Director Myers offered that the Board of County Commissioners have agreed to contribute to the expenses incurred by utilizing the services of the Ruckelshaus Institute. A global email for the committee was the next discussion item. County Planning Director Myers stated an email address of [WPLI@sublettewyo.com](mailto:WPLI@sublettewyo.com) could be made available through the County server, with emails to this address either auto forwarded to each committee member or filtered through Planning Director Myers. The committee approved of this approach, with Committee member Bell asking that emails be auto forwarded directly to his email.

Next on the agenda was a discussion of data needs and sources available to the committee. Mr. Smutko distributed a handout and began the discussion by telling the committee to start thinking about what information the committee feels will be needed to make decisions and where that information is going to come from. The committee discussed available mapping of the Wilderness Study Areas, the need to be informed of any rights or encumbrances linked to Study Areas, visitor information regarding the areas and BLM/Forest Service management plans. Co-Chairman Smitherman gave a detailed explanation of resources available to the committee, including resources from the BLM/Forest Service and changes regarding wilderness characteristics, especially with respect to BLM policy. Co-Chairman Smitherman continued by discussing a data folder being developed by the Wilderness Society, which would be completed soon and available on the Wyoming County Commissioners Association website. The committee discussed the Lovejoy report as a source of information regarding BLM Study Areas. Discussion of a mechanism for sharing information was addressed by Mr. Smutko, with Mr. Smutko agreeing to set up a Google drive for the committee. Mr. Smutko asked Co-Chairman Smitherman to further discuss how the evaluation of wilderness characteristics has changed and evolved, with Co-Chairman Smitherman doing so. Asking the BLM and Forest Service for specific data on each Study Area prior to field trips was discussed by the committee, including having a representative from the respective agency present on field trips. A dialogue between Sublette and Teton counties regarding Shoal Creek was the next discussion item, with the committee agreeing to invite participation by Teton County. A final discussion item addressed the alternatives to wilderness designations. In summary, Mr. Smutko will set up a Google drive and post available information for review by the committee, with Co-Chairman Smitherman providing information from the Wilderness Society and a link to mapping for Mr. Smutko to post.

Next on the agenda was a discussion of field trips. Co-Chairman Smitherman offered that he had arranged for a pilot to provide fly overs of Shoal Creek for the committee members. Two flights would be required, as half of the committee members could be seated for each flight. Dates of September 18, 2016 and October 13, 2016 were agreed to by the committee for the flights. Dates for ground visits to Lake Mountain and Scab Creek were discussed, with the committee agreeing to a site visit of the Lake Mountain Wilderness Study Area on October 14, 2016. The committee asked Planning Director Myers

to arrange for a facility for a town hall meeting after the site visit. Time for the site visit was set from 8 AM – 5:30 PM, with Planning Director Myers to arrange transportation and bag lunches for committee members. The committee directed Committee member Lanning to arrange for the BLM manager of the Lake Mountain Study Area to attend the field trip and town hall meeting.

Co-Chairmen Smitherman and Landers asked for public comment. Stephanie Kessler of the Wyoming Outdoor Council encouraged the committee to set a time and place near Big Piney where members of the public could meet the committee for the field trip and to invite any interested stake holders to attend. Ms. Kessler continued by telling the committee that a Friday evening was not very conducive to public participation in a town hall meeting after the field trip. Pat Kearney of the Greater Yellowstone Collation stated that he appreciated the work of the committee. In light of Ms. Kessler's comments, the committee decided to arrange for the public to meet the committee at 9 AM at Obos Market in Big Piney on October 14, 2016. The committee decided to not hold a town hall meeting after the field trip, instead scheduling the regular committee meeting of November 2, 2016 at the Marbleton Town Hall from 1 PM – 5 PM, with a town hall meeting to discuss the field trip to the Lake Mountain Study Area being held afterwards from 5:30 PM – 7 PM. The committee once again asked that Committee member Lanning arrange for the BLM to be represented on the field trip and at the November 2<sup>nd</sup> town hall meeting. The committee asked Mr. Lanning to have the BLM assist in inviting any stake holders with an interest in Lake Mountain to attend and participate.

With no further business, the Advisory Committee meeting was adjourned at 4:30 PM.