

MOFFAT COUNTY LAND USE BOARD MEETING MINUTES Monday December 8, 2014

Attendees:

Heather McSloop, LUB
Dean Gent, LUB
Burt Clements, LUB
T. Wright Dickinson, LUB
Jerod Smith, LUB
Kevin Wilbanks , LUB
Dave Watson, LUB
Steven Hinkemeyer, LUB
Doug Wellman, LUB
Bob Grub, LUB
Wendy Wrenolds, BLM
Pam Levit, BLM
Dario Archuleta, BLM
Chuck Grobe, Moffat County Commissioner
Jeff Comstock, Moffat County Natural Resources Dept.

Call to Order:

Steve called the meeting to order at 7:00

Approval of Minutes from Last Meeting

Burt /Heather/Unanimous

General Discussion

BLM Updates

Lands With Wilderness Character

Wendy thanked the Land Use Board for their interest in travel management and lands with wilderness character (LWC). She introduced Dario Archuleta and Pam Levitt to discuss the topics. Dario clarified LWC is different than Wilderness Study Areas. The LWC inventory is intended to monitor change in the landscape over time. He stated that size is the first criteria. Only acreage 5000 acres or greater are eligible for inventory. He also clarified LWC is not a NEPA process and doesn't go through a public review period although comments are welcome.

Heather asks how it affects the oil and gas NEPA process. Wendy stated it doesn't weigh any heavier than any other value typically reviewed. The BLM I.D. team will look at LWC along side of every other resource inventory out there such as erosive soils, steep slopes, plant communities, etc. Things that would be noted that may disqualify an area from a LWC include state highways, county roads, BLM roads that have had regular maintenance, significant manmade impacts, etc.

If there was significant human impact, i.e. oil gas development, areas may be not meet the LWC requirement. Dario pointed out that today an area may qualify for a LWC, but that if something such as the TransWest power line were built, it may cause the same area to not be qualified for an LWC next time and inventory is conducted.

T.Wright didn't agree that 1979 was the latest inventory. He said 1999 was the most recent one. Pam clarified that 1999 wasn't a full LWC inventory, 1999 was just a Vermillion and Duffy Mountain area inventory.

Much discussion occurred about the BLM techniques that were used to inventory and identify LWC's.

Pam discussed the details regarding each area inventoried and why or why not they qualified for LWC.

Travel Management Planning

Travel management plan is a separate stand alone effort, not part of the Land Use Planning efforts.

Dario explained that the travel management planning is a route-by-route process to designate open, limited, or closed. Designating routes is the ultimate goal as well as designating the type of use for each route, such as foot, horse, bike, ATV, or jeep/4x4. Often timing of use of routes will be designated also. The Travel Management Process also identified permitted and authorized routes.

The end results for travel management planning are maps and various plans. Plans created are signage plans, enforcement plans, education plans, and route development plans.

Inventories of BLM property are being conducted currently, and the public should expect comment periods at the end of 2015 or early 2016 for inventory only. Developing the plan will come after the inventory is complete and timelines for that have not been set yet. BLM has digitized some areas that have been difficult to access and they cannot ground truth.

Discussions occurred about what is the best way that BLM can work with the County to review the existing completed inventories. Wendy agreed to have a local meeting with a committee of the land use board to compare County RS 2477 routes with BLM inventory.

T.Wright requested that Kent Walter be asked to present a similar presentation to the LUB since he is conducting travel management simultaneously in the White River Field Office.

Elkhead Update

Regarding the ongoing discussion about draining Elkhead and killing the fish population, Colorado River District, cities, and Tristate have taken a position to NOT drain Elkhead and kill the fish population. With these local desires, it is likely that CPW will try netting the spillway as a first effort.

Burt stated there will be a meeting tomorrow with the City and County night to discuss the proposed CPW plans.

T. Wright suggested Club 20 pass a resolution to support endangered fish funding and also ask Scott Tipton to get funding for fish screening.

Habitat Exchange Update

Colorado is working hard to submit a draft package to USFWS by the end of the year. They are close to completing a DRAFT package and industry has a scientist representative on the science team who is working with the other team members to review the evaluation model. Heather viewed this as a big step. T. Wright and Heather think a draft of the Habitat Exchange will be submitted to USFWS by the end of year.

SLB Stewardship Trust

Jeff reported that Mindy had removed the threat language from the parcel descriptions for those nominated to the Stewardship Trust. Heather asked if tenants have been notified. T.Wright said that we still need to know the benefits or disadvantages for each parcel. Jerod said that the Moffat County parcels were going to be added to the Trust at the sacrifice of others in SW Colorado. T.Wright said that the counties role must be the big picture concern of taking postage stamp pieces and trying to accomplish landscape objectives on grouse, oil and gas, or grazing. It is not understood how placing parcels in the Trust will help manage either of the three uses above. It is disingenuous to say that 320 acres makes or breaks sage grouse population success in Moffat County , the State, or the region. Postage stamp management doesn't conserve landscape scale problems.

Updates:

none

Future Agenda Items

C20 pub lands debate

Elkhead

Sage grouse

Adjournment:

9:40 PM

Burt Dave Unanimous