

MINUTES
Alaska Resource Advisory Council Meeting
Fairbanks District Office--Fairbanks, AK
February 14-15, 2006

DAY 1-Tuesday, February 14, 2006

Council Members Present: Tom Crafford, Greg Beischer, Charlie Boddy, Phil Driver, Barbara Fullmer, Sandra Key, Suzanne McCarthy, Susan Olsen, David van den Berg, June McAtee, Jim Posey & Teresa Imm (teleconference). **Council Members Absent:** Scott Hala & Keith Tryck.

BLM Representatives Present: Henri Bisson, Ramone McCoy, Gary Reimer, Bob Schneider, Shelly Jacobson, Jim Ducker, Joe Kurtak, Susan Childs, John Payne, Herb Brownell, Holli McClain, Lon Kelly, George Oviatt, Mike Klevin, Jeanie Cole, Kyle Joly, Jim Herriges, Dennis Tayman, Wendy Longtin, Leah Dailey & Danielle Allen.

Others present: Tom Lohman, North Slope Borough; Rachel James, Alaska Coalition; Brian Pearson, North Slope Borough; Stefan Milkowski, News-Miner; Aventurine Engineering, Scott Stebbins

Meeting CALLED TO ORDER at 10: 00 a.m. by Chair, Tom Crafford. Welcome and housekeeping by Bob Schneider. The council accepted/approved minutes of the October 2005 Resource Advisory Council (RAC) meeting as written.

STATE DIRECTOR'S UPDATE: State Director, Henri Bisson, thanked the RAC for past guidance. Bisson highlighted points from the February 2006 Major Issues Briefing Paper (See Handout). Bisson supports the President's 2007 budget but wants the RAC to note one key impact to Alaska--a 2.3 million reduction in the Alaska Minerals program. Olsen asked about the status of mineral work through next summer in the NPR-A South. Bisson explained that the BLM completed the work. Joe Kurtak, BLM Geologist, said that the results of the mineral studies in the NPR-A South were published in January 2006 and that follow-up work will be done over a 10 day period this summer (2006). Biescher wanted to know how serious the funding reduction for the minerals programs was and Bisson said it was very serious. Bisson then remarked that the 2007 Budget includes money to support the Energy Policy Act of 2005 and that the BLM might engage in the clean up of legacy wells on the North Slope. Cost: approximately 4 million. Bisson then remarked that BLM AK (NPR-A) will split a grant of \$360,000 with White River, CO in order to design monitoring strategies for the North Slope Science Initiative (NSSI). The Secretary of the Interior appointed 15 members to this Science Technical Group from the sixty-seven applications that were received.

Van den Berg asked what would happen to the money budgeted for ANWR if there is no leasing program. Bisson explained that if the leasing program does not happen, the money will most likely be used for other initiatives like NSSI, legacy wells, etc. Bisson believes that since ANWR is part of the budget resolution, the funding should happen.

Olsen asked if any National Land Conservation Systems existed in Alaska, and Bisson said that that the White Mountains and Steese were included as well as the Wild and Scenic Rivers.

Bisson explained that the BLM is continuing to work the issue with the State regarding its acquisition of the utility corridor and that the BLM has expressed resident concerns regarding subsistence. The issue now is subsistence vs. increased sport hunting. The final plan is still about a month and a half out. Van den Berg asked about the timing of the release and Bisson said it would be a little later than originally planned. Bisson agreed to

keep the RAC abreast of any new developments. He also explained that there would be a consistency review by State and government as well as a public review period. McCarthy asked how the State's decision would be affected if the plan comes up with a preferred alternative. Bisson explained that only the Secretary can lift that withdrawal (Secretary retains withdrawal because of national interest). Furthermore, the situation is not without precedence as the State has obtained some land within the corridor.

FAIRBANKS DISTRICT OFFICE UPDATE: Bob Schneider, Fairbanks District Manager, introduced his field managers-Lon Kelly, Shelly Jacobson, and Tom Edgerton and announced the ARPA/AT Conference in Fairbanks April 5th - 8th (Handout).

ARCTIC FIELD OFFICE UPDATE: Lon Kelly, Manager Arctic Field Office, presented his report (See Handout). Discussion centered around the shorebird staging study on the North Slope. Bisson explained that the birds are the reason that the BLM did not lease that area. Key wanted to know if the studies included the invertebrates the birds feed on. Kelly replied that it did not greatly represent the invertebrates. Key asked who else was involved and what the BLM's hope was for using the study as a baseline. Kelly said that six to seven entities are involved and that he would have to get back with Key as the 2006 field effort develops.

CENTRAL YUKON FIELD OFFICE UPDATE: Shelly Jacobson, Central Yukon Field Manager, presented her report (See Handout). Discussion centered around the Dalton Highway Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Legislation (SB85) (Seekins Bill). Key asked how long it would take for a RAMP to be available if the bill passes. Jacobson replied that if the bill passed in May, she did not think the BLM would have an OHV plan done within 12 months. Bisson said one possibility is to revert back to the use plan. The plan has measures/tools to protect the lands put into play by the bill (emergency closures, etc.). Van den Berg asked if the BLM expects change in the management objectives for the Dalton Hwy corridor. Jacobson was uncertain as the BLM has only written a plan/management objectives to open the area to OHV in the winter. She explained that if summer access was available (BLM does not get a lot of summer use requests), the plan might change. Van den Berg replied that planning might be an element that the BLM would have to take and asked if there were any others. Jacobson said other things to consider would be budgeting for signage, enforcement, public communication, etc. Bisson explained that if this happened, BLM-AK would need to ask DC for a budget. Van den Berg asked if the state could assume any expenses and Schneider replied that the State has a ban on OHV on the Dalton Hwy. The BLM is the only enforcement. If the state backs off, the BLM would do enforcement under its own rules.

EASTERN INTERIOR FIELD OFFICE UPDATE: Tom Edgerton, Acting Field Manager, presented his report (See Handout). No questions/discussion.

BREAK for lunch at 11:37 a.m. RECONVENED at 12: 01 p.m.

NOMINATIONS FOR RAC CHAIR & VICE-CHAIR: Boddy nominated Key for RAC Chair position. Van den Berg seconded. Key nominated Boddy for Vice-Chair position. Van den Berg seconded. Verbal vote was taken. Unanimous election. Key elected as RAC Chair and Boddy as RAC Vice-Chair.

Key stated she is flattered, pleased to be the RAC Chair (caveat on acceptance). She stated she would like to have the RAC to have more accountability and to take action on issues. Boddy agreed and said he believes the RAC members need to have their information packets prior to the meetings. Additionally, he suggested that the field managers not read their reports to the RAC. Boddy also said that with the group's diverse backgrounds and willingness to work together, the RAC should tackle issues like this afternoon's South NPR-A. Additionally, Boddy suggested that the RAC field trips are extremely important as they get us on the ground and allow interaction among the RAC members instead of meeting in the sterile environment of a meeting room.

CULTURAL RESOURCES PRESENTATION: Archaeologist Mike Kunz discussed his archeological find. For information about this presentation, please contact him directly as there is a media embargo on the information due to its upcoming publication in Nature magazine.

SOUTH NPR-A SCOPING & MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES OVERVIEW: Bob Schneider presented an overview via Power Point. The presentation covered oil and gas, sensitive resources, subsistence, rivers, hardrock mining, and coal leasing in South NPR-A. Olsen asked who would make the criteria if coal and hardrock mining are determined to be within the scope. Bisson said that the decision is up to the State Director and that at this point, he would see what the outcome is from the RAC process, go back to DC to discuss personal thoughts, and then determine if these options are not within the scope and/or not likely to be developed in the near future. Ultimately Congress will make the decision on what happens on that withdrawn land. Key noted that she was concerned about the way the Notice of Intent (NOI) went out and that it seems like the BLM got skewed public comments. Schneider explained that the NOI did ask about 4 issues concerning rivers because of the nature of the area. The comments were primarily about the Utukok River Special Area. Kleven explained that he thought protection of the rivers was important, but that it should not be done through designation because it places limits on subsistence abilities. There is almost no support from villages for special designation. Olsen asked what the life of the plan would be and Bisson replied that the life of a BLM plan is about 15-20 years with reviews every 5 years for updates. Beischer asked if any work had been done on economics and Kurtak replied that Scott Stebbins of Aventurine Engineering did economics work on contract for BLM-AK (See Below).

BREAK at 2:25 p.m. RESUME meeting at 2:55 p.m.

SCOTT STEBBINS OF AVENTURINE ENGINEERING: Stebbins reported that his company looked at 4 areas in South NPR-A from an economic standpoint (i.e. mobilization, etc.). He thinks one can get a good idea of physical and economic impacts from development. Stebbins concluded that there is no infrastructure and that there are 4 different access road possibilities. Additionally, resources are very poorly defined at this point, and none of the resources are of economic value without a road. Road costs are HUGE. Key asked who would have to pay for the road and Stebbins replied that they considered both company and government funding options. Van den Berg asked if the resources could be better defined and Bisson explained BLM-AK could drill, but still the question remains: What company is going to spend that kind of money to build a road?

Bisson explained that BLM-AK has the report (from Scott Stebbins); it will be used by staff depending on the issues as well as in determining what sort of strategy to use for recommendations. He then highlighted Scott's point that a road into this country costs approximately \$1.5 million/mile. Bisson explained that there are some issues for the RAC to consider. First, the mineral deposits are there, but the BLM doesn't know size or extent at this point. It is easy to predict that if the BLM moves ahead and opens the area to the 1872 mining laws and Congress allows, someone will get in there and sit. The BLM could also say the area would be opened when it becomes economically viable. If it is economically viable at some point, then Congress should open it. The BLM could also issue an exploration license, and then if a company finds something, lease it to them. The BLM could get more information about the area this way. Bisson asked Stebbins if it would be fair to say that economic viability really depends on anything that the Arctic Slope Regional Corporation (ASRC) might do with lands west of this area of development in the foothills. Stebbins said yes. Olsen asked if the Feds could front this money and Bisson said he did not think this scenario was likely because this is the caribou's migratory path and calving area.

Posey posed a series of questions about what the RAC's objective was to be: Evaluate options for range of alternatives? Refine existing alternative options? Come up with own alternative? List issues? Key stated that a RAC alternative would be ideal. Tom Lohman of the North Slope Borough said that he believed a preferred alternative at this point would be a bad idea and that the RAC needed to do an analysis first.

MANAGEMENT STRATEGY WORK GROUP-14 FEB 2006: The BLM RAC discussed many topics/issues about the NPR-A South over the two day meeting in Fairbanks. Facilitators took notes on flip charts; the transcript of notes from the flip charts has been attached as Attachment 4. Based on this discussion, two subcommittees were formed. Subcommittee one's charter is to identify areas of high natural and subsistence value and make recommendations as to how the BLM should address the issues in the alternatives. Subcommittee two's charter is to identify whether the BLM should address hardrock mining and coal development in the NPR-A South draft and if the BLM should recommend that it be included in one or more of the alternatives and how these should be accomplished. Both subcommittees should bring their work in the form of recommendations to the July meeting for full discussion with the goal of leaving that meeting with recommendations/resolutions on both issues. Both committees were encouraged to be prepared to discuss their work at the April meeting in Juneau.

NSSI BRIEFING: John Payne, NSSI Coordinator

The Science Technical Group will hold its first meeting in mid-April and it will be mainly an introduction session. Over 1 million hits have been recorded on the website which is being recreated with the help of the North Pacific Research Board (NPRB) and the University Alaska GINA. Furthermore, the NSSI has been recognized as an important initiative and the BLM continues to be the primary funding source (about 3 million dollars). Currently, development of a monitoring plan is the key topic based on a grant from the national subcommittee. Bisson remarked that he would be asking the Washington Office for a dedicated stream of funding. Olsen asked if industry had been approached in regards to funding, and Bisson said that industry had spent a lot of money, but he would like to see a matching program unfold. Bisson suggested a target amount of \$6-10 million/year. The RAC decided that the need for RMT coordination/sponsorship no longer existed since NSSI is to incorporate RMT's work under its charter. One final RMT closeout meeting will be held in the upcoming months.

Meeting ADJOURNED for the day at 5:06 p.m.

DAY 2-Wednesday, February 15, 2006 Meeting CALLED to order by Key, RAC Chair at 8:05 a.m.

Present: Beischer, Olsen, Driver, Posey, Bisson, Key, McAtee, McCarthy, van den Berg

Not present: Fullmer, Crafford, Imm (couldn't arrange teleconference in), Tryck, Hala & Boddy

MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES DISCUSSION (CONT.)-15 FEB 2006: See attachment 4 for a transcript of facilitator notes.

BREAK at 9:30 a.m. RECONVENED at 10:04 a.m.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS FROM MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES DISCUSSION: Van den Berg asked what the BLM can do to give maximum protection to surface resources. Bisson responded that the Secretary can authorize areas for special protection. Van den Berg stated that he felt the committee had come a long way yesterday towards understanding the need for more protection for special areas, maybe even to the point of making a resolution. He said he didn't want the RAC to leave the meeting at a point where planners understood where the RAC was coming from, and then when the RAC next sees the management plan draft, the RAC members won't recognize anything from what has happened/been discussed at this meeting. Furthermore, van den Berg said he felt the subcommittee function should continue to happen and that Bisson should ask his staff to continue to work with the subcommittee.

GLENNALLEN FIELD OFFICE UPDATE: Ramone McCoy, Field Manager, presented her report (See Handout). Bisson mentioned the BLM is going to try to convey to the State the land used for the Arctic Man

event; therefore, the BLM would no longer have administrative jurisdiction and be the permit issuers. McCarthy stated that she sees that the use of BLM lands in this region has increased. With better roads and easier access, people are coming. McCarthy said she thinks the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park is up and coming. The park has a draw but is not accessible; the issues in this area of accessible BLM lands can give the RAC insight into the future and help us with our planning with the South NPR-A. Key said she agreed and that she thought as the RAC looked at the South NPR-A, this idea of future recreation and hunting is another argument for looking at some of the wildlife values and BLM lands access issues.

ANCHORAGE FIELD OFFICE REPORT: Gary Reimer, Field Manager, presented his report (See Handout). Discussion centered around the idea that there are bears at the Campbell Tract. The BLM had been managing for transitory bears, but now the BLM realizes that the bears are residing on and around the Tract. BLM is working with the Department of Fish & Game to make a decision to either develop an adaptive management strategy or to close the trails. If the BLM moves these bears, another male will move in. There are 60 bears in the greater area and the males establish territory. A bear will be on this land. (BLM has and has had black bears on the Tract as well.)

Meeting ADJOURNED at 11:36 for lunch. RECONVENED at 12:49 p.m.

NO PUBLIC COMMENTS AT 1 P.M.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: The meeting critique will be completed via email to save time. Boddy and Tryck will discuss the Fire Resolution at a later date. The next meeting will be in Juneau. The RAC will plan to stay at the Baranof. In regards to the July Field Trip, Charlie Boddy offered to arrange a tour with Usibelli Mine. Field managers should write a synopsis of hot issues they want the RAC to look at and avoid a rundown of reports. The RAC asks Henri Bisson to inform the managers that RAC members are open for discussions about any topic.

Beischer asked what would happen after the 207 Report is delivered to Congress. Bisson said that Congress would decide whether or not to lift the withdrawal.

Beischer asked how accelerating the process of conveyance could be considered and yet funding be cut. Bisson replied that the BLM is not getting anywhere near the \$50 million to reach the 2009 goal. The plan then is to try to at least get lands under native control. In order to do so, the BLM needs to complete the survey work. Beischer asked if the 2009 native corps conveyance is complete. Bisson said he believed it is. He said using the tools in legislation the bulk of the work would be completed by 2009.

DAVID VAN DEN BERG PRESENTS DRAFT RESOLUTIONS #1 & #2 (See Attachments)

Key explained that her understanding of these ideas was that the RAC would work on them now and bring them to the May meeting. Beischer said that he was also surprised to see these as full draft resolutions. He thought the RAC agreed to compile a list of pros/cons and then to go from there. Van den Berg said his purpose was to capture the RAC's Day One discussion and that these draft resolutions seemed the best way to present the ideas. Beischer explained that he would rather see the subcommittees created by the RAC make the lists of pros/cons. Van den Berg said he was glad the RAC is coming to the conclusion that these ideas should pass through subcommittees. He suggested that he had been consistently articulating for the past 3 years the need for additional protection for special areas. Bisson suggested that these draft resolutions become part of the minutes. Key suggested a more detailed look at these at the meeting in Juneau. Van den Berg said he expects that the subcommittees will come with recommendations and/or draft resolutions regarding these special areas/special protection concerns. Beischer said he believes that there should be stronger protection for some areas and that it needs to be discerned if the BLM has more tools it can use to protect these special areas. Van den Berg believes the BLM does have tools and that the RAC needs to find out how to strengthen the Utukok Uplands and

Colville River areas. Olsen suggested adding language that says “when you come up with a special area, you come up with this specific set of guiding principles as well.”

Motion to Adjourn by Posey. Seconded by Olsen. Meeting ADJOURNED at 1:50 p.m.

(Attachment 1)
Proposed Language for RAC Resolution 01-06
Fairbanks, February 15

Whereas issues drive EIS planning processes and will likewise drive the South NPR-A IAP/EIS; and

Whereas the NPRPA provides for “maximum protection” of surface resources consistent with the purposes for which the NPR-A was established; and

Whereas “maximum protection” is a planning issue as easily applied broadly to known resource values in NPR-A as it is narrowly applied to conservation of caribou habitat; and

Whereas the RAC understands that more can be done to protect known surface values in the NPR-A than has been done in previous, recent NPR-A plans; and

Whereas the BLM presently has at its disposal only two means by which to protect surface resources, namely, to not lease an area or to include an area in the Wild and Scenic River System;

Therefore be it resolved that the BLM RAC requests that BLM consider in its “potential management strategies” and in its development of alternatives for full analysis additional, real means by which to protect known surface values; and

Be it further resolved that the RAC will create a “Special Areas and Special Places” subcommittee comprised of one RAC member from each RAC category to help the BLM achieve additional, real protections within the NPR-A, and whose tasks include recommending management prescriptions for existing Special Areas and suggesting special places in the landscape of the southern NPR-A.

Author: David van den Berg

(Attachment 2)
Proposed Language for RAC Resolution 02-06
Fairbanks, February 15

Whereas the NPR-A was established as a petroleum reserve expressly closed to mineral and coal entry; and

Whereas all previous EISs for the NPR-A have found both mineral and coal entry to be beyond the scope of those plans; and

Whereas the southern NPR-A has a different resource profile from the other planning areas; and

Whereas the determination of a plan's scope is at the discretion of the State Director, then

Be it Resolved that the RAC will create a "Hard Rock and Coal" subcommittee comprised of at least one RAC member from each RAC category to determine and advise the RAC if mineral entry should be within the scope of the South NPR-A IAP/EIS, and whose tasks include recommending how mineral and coal entry should be treated in the EIS.

Author: David van den Berg

(Attachment 3)

MEETING HANDOUTS (Contact Danielle Allen, RAC Coordinator @ 907.271.3335)

- BLM Alaska Major Issues, Feb. 2006
- Bureau of Land Management 2007 Budget Paper
- BLM Budget Fiscal Year 2007, 6 Feb. 2006
- National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska, Manager's Update
- Central Yukon Field Office RAC Update-February 2006
- Eastern Interior Field Office, February 2006
- Glennallen Field Office – February 2006
- RAC Update, Anchorage Field Office, 14 Feb. 2006
- NSSI Phamplet (BLM/AK/AK/AD-06/008+1739+930)
- NSSI Members List, 30 Jan. 2006
- The North Slope Science Initiative (NSSI) Program Overview
- Fossils on America's Public Lands (BLM/WO/GI-97/006+3032+REV06)
- South NPR-A Proposed Management Strategies Summary (Jan 2006 Draft)
- Mining in the South Planning Area of the NPR-A Impact Potential Report, 28 Oct. 2005
- NW and NE NPR-A Required Operating Procedures and Lease Stipulations,
- Oil and Gas Potential in the Southern Planning Area
- Maps
 - South NPRA-Mineral Deposit Favorability Ranking (2 pages)
 - South NPRA Planning Area Geology\
 - Southern NPR-A Airborne Geophysical Survey
 - Western Arctic Caribou Primary Calving Area and Critical Insect Relief Habitat
 - 2005 BLM EM Survey Area & Misheguk Mt Quad Showing USGS and NURE Stream Sediment Ag Data
 - 2005 BLM EM Survey Area & Misheguk Mt Quad Showing USGS and NURE Stream Sediment U Data
 - 2005 BLM EM Survey Area & Misheguk Mt Quad Showing USGS and NURE Stream Sediment Zn Data

(Attachment 4)

BLM Resource Advisory Council 14-15 Feb 2006
Management Strategy Work Group

Day 1: 14 Feb 2006

I. Managing minerals on BLM lands

- Include minerals?
- Do **not** include minerals?
- How will minerals be addressed in this document?
- Has BLM missed anything?
- Do the resource specialists have enough information to analyze impacts?

II. BLM needs to/should collaborate with affected communities beyond G-to-G consultation process required by regulations.

III. Include subsistence in the issues within management strategies development.

IV. Justify/explain criteria used in the development of management strategies.

V. Consider NLCS for valuable resource protection.

VI. HNR (All Resources) of R/WSR

- Include land allocations as protective measures
- Identify high resource values (rigorously)
 - Rivers
 - Uplands
 - Birds
 - Caribou
 - Subsistence
- Incorporate LUEA's similar to the original NE to identify these 'hot spots' for surface resources (irregardless of conflict or issue)

VII. Land Allocations, i.e.

- Unavailable
- Should go beyond not leasing through this planning process in protecting valuable resources.
- Could be on the level of "**special areas**"
- Propose no lease/special areas to protect valuable surface resources.
- Describe these "**special areas**" as discreetly as possible to go beyond the point "**no/unavailable**" leasing.
- Focus on protecting subsistence resources, possibly beyond "mitigating" the conflict (oil & gas, hard rock, coal).

VIII. Discussion: Legislative recommendation in **this** plan

- Politically costly
- Not economic
- State Director may ask to pass a resolution on what should be included in this plan.
- Discuss roads & their impacts—both surface and economically.

Day 2: Feb 15, 2006

I. Transportation (Roads, Oil & Gas Pipelines)

- Barrow
- Dalton Hiway
- Omalik
- Red Dog

II. Pipelines

- Oil (above ground)
- Gas (buried)
- Possible coal slurry / pipeline

III. Hard Rock

- Examine hard rock
 - Alternatives for transportation and economics
- Do Not consider hard rock in final
 - No roads
- Roads could be considered for utility purposes (not hard rock and coal) and be analyzed for surface impact.

IV. Oil & Gas

Considered

- Buried pipeline
- Roadless
- leasing

V. Hard rock mining (consider or not)

- need input from entire RAC

VI. Coal Mining (consider or not)

- need input from entire RAC

VII. Include Oil & Gas in a reasonably foreseeable developmental scenario or in an alternative

- Pipelines
 - Oil (above ground)
 - Gas (below ground)
 - Roadless (no roads outside of NPRA)
- What exactly would the rights to lessees actually be?

—need further definition in this document
(Tom Loman's concern-NSB)

VI. Designated Special Areas (D. Van den Berg)

- CRSA—currently managed under 1983 EIS & NPRPA
- Utokok Uplands
- Special “places” to be determined by sub-committee for reporting in May
- Sandra Key—Recommends an Adhoc Committed to address this topic

VII. Special Area Sub-Committee Charge (Chair: David Van Den Berg)

Members: Phil Driver, Teresa Imm, June McAtee, Barbara Fullmer, Scott Hala, Susan Olsen

- Consult with Kurtak, FDO & NSB
- Develop management strategies for special areas
 - ✓ Size (land allocations)
 - ✓ Mitigation for
 - ✓ Surface values and geologic values
 - ✓ Identify special places

VIII. Coal Hard Rock Mining Sub-Committee (Chair: Charlie Boddy)

Members: June McAtee, Suzanne McCarthy, Teresa Imm,
Greg Beischer, Tom Crafford, Keith Tryck

- Consult with BLM (FDO & 940) and NSB
- Charged with addressing the “coal” topic
 - ✓ Include pros/cons
 - ✓ Do not include pros/cons
 - ✓ Conditions
 - ✓ Present recommendations at next meeting

IX. Caribou

- Subsistence (including cultural)
- Sport
- WACH-may seed other herds
- Consistent management with agreed upon WACH plan
- Phil Driver to be RAC contact person on WACHWG