

Federal Lands Committee

June 4th, 2009

Cam-Plex Energy Bldg, Gillette, WY

Meeting called to order by Chair, Charles Price. Vice-Chair Glen Alameda, assisting.

Recognition of individuals representing important entities: Steve Ferrell, Director, WGFD; Maggie Beal (Sen. Barrasso); Robin Bailey (Sen. Enzi); Pete Obermueller (Rep. Lummis); Chuck Quimby, Rky Mtn Region USFS Range Lead; Ric Forsman, Intermountain Region USFS Range Lead; Leanne Stevenson, WDA Natural Resources Program Mgr.

Public Lands Council Report – Rob Hellyer. PLC met in Twin Falls about a year ago where Jim Magagna encouraged broadening the base of support. The result was a Grazing Summit this winter in Salt Lake City. The lead talk was given by Dr. Jim Knight. His message regarded interconnectedness and importance of ranches. The meeting began building bridges with discussion on several issues. A broad group of interest groups were present and there is indication that the discussions shall continue, perhaps with more difficult issues.

Congressional Update - Beal, Obermueller, and Bailey

Beal shared general thoughts, saying the delegation (and minority) have moved into a defensive mode. Barrasso has begun a western caucus in the senate with 10 conservative western senators. This summer not many environmental or natural resource issues on the agenda. They've been working on energy legislation behind the scenes. Obermueller reported that Lummis has been working on the wild horse bill and NREPA. Hope to see the wild horse bill go away and expects that NREPA will not move. BLM Update – no BLM representatives at the meeting. BLM is involved in a statewide leadership meeting demanding everyone's presence.

USFS Update – Ric Forsman and Chuck Quimby discussed current Categorical Exclusion litigation. These are currently in settlement discussions. They discussed the updated rescission act schedule. They are scheduling allotments for NEPA. Some will be issued without, others will need supplemental analysis. Discussed Bighorn Sheep and Domestic Sheep Issues. Three lawsuits on Payette over various issues.

Wyoming State Grazing Board – Dick Loper

Reminders that permit renewal go on and is a continuing struggle. Find out when your permit comes up and get involved with monitoring. It will help with the renewal process. Also be involved in Rangeland Health assessments. Wyoming has a good Joint Cooperative Monitoring Program. He encouraged people to get involved. Encourage you to be protective of data from private and state lands. On the issue of wild horses, he is hopeful the bill will fail and appreciates the work Rep. Lummis has done. There is an alternative proposal to reduce horses to a number where public will adopt annual surplus.

There is a BLM instruction memo regarding surface disturbing activities, specifically reclamation. As of March 1, the range improvement program falls under surface disturbing activities. The question is who pays? He suggested the issue be addressed up-front with local range specialist. On the issue of sage grouse, he suggested landowners get involved with others to be proactive regarding sage grouse management.

Gary Rice, Chair of the Wyoming State Grazing board suggested that the use of the ORV policy be approached delicately.

Charles Price witnessed, regarding monitoring, that conservation district and BLM have an agreement regarding monitoring and that the information from monitoring on the Upper Green River Cattle Association had helped make issues go away.

Litigation Update – Jim Magagna

WSGA attempted to file as an intervener in a challenge to Forest Service Permit Renewals on 376 allotments across the west. Though barred from intervening on the issue, WSGA has been granted intervener status for remedies. BLM Resource Management Plans have been challenged regarding sage grouse. Kemmerer, Rawlins, Pinedale, and Casper were involved. WSGA has sought involvement.

Western Legacy Alliance – Jim Magagna

Western Legacy Alliance is a newly formed group with the purpose of enhancing public relations and battling opposition. He encouraged support for the group.

Policy and Directives:

Expiring Policies include #3, #33, #36. In addition, there was a question regarding #16.

#3: Move to reaffirm by Doug Cooper, seconded by Gary Rice. Motion passed.

#16: Move to amend by John Griffin, seconded by David Kane to read, "Oppose the introduction of free and wild roaming buffalo on any federal or state land or the Wind River Reservation. Amendment passed. Motion to pass by John Griffin, seconded by Chas Kane. Motion passed.

#33: Move to reaffirm by Mill Lambert, seconded by Gene Hardy. Motion passed.

#36: Motion to amend by John Espy, seconded by Niels Hansen to read, "Encourage the Bureau of Land Management to consider requiring a mitigation agreement satisfactory to the affected grazing permittees in the decision to approve a proposed energy development permit." Motion to pass by John Espy, seconded by Niels Hansen; motion passed.

Announcement by Glen Alameda about a Spike 20P Workshop June 24 and 25 in the Baggs/Rawlins area.

Meeting adjourned.