

February 4, 2025

The Natural Resources Advisory Committee meeting was called to order by Chair Svejcar at 6:06 p.m. The following members were in attendance: Jesse Svejcar, Bruce Rickman, Nick Schott, Merle Reid, Dave Bohnert, Chad Boyd, Rob Frank, Tony Svejcar.

Members did the Pledge of Allegiance.

There was no old business to discuss.

Discussion was had about the Blue Mountain Forest Plan draft that was disseminated to the members. Frank informed them that there was language about the 21" diameter rule for timber harvest and the members discussed the possibilities for outlets for harvested timber. The agency could make it easier for small mills to get started and have smaller scale sales that would be feasible for smaller industry members. The travel management plan will probably be addressed separately from the Forest Plan. There was discussion about riparian monitoring and how the Forest Service should pursue a more holistic approach. It was suggested that there could be language changed in the Rangeland section to allow for adaptive management concerning grazing, and that grazing could be used as a tool. There is a possibility for strategic grazing for ecosystem management and wildfire prevention with enhancements in technology. Wildlife needs to be metered and managed as they utilize the forage resources. The section about native species needs to have more flexibility so that the agency isn't painted into a corner and open to litigation if there are unforeseeable increases in invasive plants.

Discussion was had about the Conservation and Landscape Health rule of the BLM, which was instated in the summer of '24. It was suggested that with the changing atmosphere at the federal level, it would be good to be patient and see how it plays out. Public Lands Council does not seem to be concerned about the possible changes to rangeland management. Frank will meet with Don Rotell, the BLM manager, and see how the County could support an informational meeting between the BLM and the community.

For the collaborative update, Boyd shared that the Wildfire Collaborative is working with Rural Fire Protection Agencies (RFPAs) and the BLM to get ahead of catastrophic wildfires. We will reach out to Aaron with High Desert Partnership (HDP) to see if we can get the previously held collaboratives going again.

For the good of the order, there was discussion about the need for a member to represent timber interests in the county. Tony Houck, Tod Hueckman, and Eric Woodworth were suggested and Frank will reach out to see if any of them would be willing to serve. Meeting times were also discussed, and it was agreed that the first Tuesday of the month at 6 pm in the basement will be the regular meeting time and location of the NRAC.

Meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:30.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rob Frank