

**NWCOS Energy and Minerals Subcommittee Meeting
March 10, 2005
Meeting Summary**

Attending

Steve Bonowski, Vanessa Cameron, Jeremy Casterson, Jeff Comstock, Fred Conrath, T. Wright Dickinson, Stephen Flaherty, Dean Gent, Tom Gray, Fred Julander, Richard Levy, Wes McStay, Reed Morris, Ann Oliver, Brad Petch, Marianna Raftopoulos, Luke Schafer, C. Crellin Scott, Jane Yazzie, Kristi Parker Celico, and Heather Bergman.

Action Items

1. NWCOS members are encouraged to provide input to Fred Conrath (and copy Helen Littrell) regarding three items:

- Words of concern on pages 4 and 7 of the “BLM Input on Goals and Objectives and Alternatives Shell” document, which is available at <http://www.nwcoss.org/79505/44432.html>. Particular issues of concern include:
 - “maximize the availability of federal oil and gas estate” (page 4)
 - the role of “national policy” in energy development policy and its relationship to local needs (page 4)
 - the meaning of “environmentally sound” energy exploration and development (page 4)
 - the meaning of “economical” energy exploration and development (page 4)
 - the absence of reference to the socioeconomic implications of energy exploration and development (page 4)
 - the role of national security and domestic sources of energy in oil and gas policy (page 4)
 - the absence of “maximizing” language with regard to renewable energy sources (page 7)
- Comments on Vanessa’s document on partnering to enhance wildlife experiences, which can be found at <http://www.nwcoss.org/79505/index.html> (at the bottom of the page).
- Creative ideas regarding alternatives, either along the lines of Vanessa’s approach or more specific to the alternatives framework, if possible. Please do not resend your scoping comments unless they are specifically formatted in terms of alternatives.

Prior to providing input, please share your ideas with someone from a different interest to help work out some of the kinks. Get them to Fred Conrath at fred_conrath@blm.gov and Helen at hlittrell@keystone.org by **April 8** so that Fred has time to try to incorporate them. Please inform Helen if you do not want your comments posted on the NWCOS website.

2. Several participants committed to contacting individuals or interests who are not currently represented on the subcommittee and invite/encourage them to come to future meetings.

Those participants and the folks they agreed to contact are:

- C. Crellin Scott: Joanne Voloshin at Tri-State Generation
- Tom Gray and Jeff Comstock: someone in the gravel or hard rock sector
- Fred Julander: someone from Yates Petroleum
- T. Wright Dickinson and Ann Oliver: someone from the utility companies

- Jeff Comstock: someone from CIG, Entrega, Questar, and/or the interstate commission (regarding right-of-way issues)
3. The Keystone Center will create a listserv for the subcommittee that members can use to share information and ideas. (Facilitator’s Note: Keystone has created this listserv. The email address is NWCOSenergysubcom@keystone.org. Any email sent to this address will be received by everyone on the subcommittee. When using the listserv, please remember that “Reply to All” is a great tool if everyone is interested in or will benefit from your reply to a message on the listserv. However, if your comment is only relevant to a small number of people, please do not “reply to all” as this just fills up inboxes unnecessarily.)
 4. Jeff Comstock agreed to be responsible for recording future subcommittee meetings and making tapes available as a resource for anyone interested in listening to them.
 5. Several participants agreed to provide maps they have regarding resources and use in the Resource Area. The following people will provide maps and descriptions of what they show to Kristi as soon as possible for posting on the NWCOS website: Fred Conrath (BLM maps), Vanessa Cameron (maps of stipulations), and Stephen Flaherty (map of timing stipulations). Anyone else with relevant data or maps is encouraged to do the same. Ann Oliver will work with Fred and Jeremy to help develop maps that will be the most helpful to NWCOS in tracking overlapping interests.
 6. Fred Conrath committed to bringing the alternative shell to the next subcommittee meeting. BLM expects to have this document completed by the end of the first week in April and anticipates having it available for discussion at the next meeting.
 7. Please get comments on this summary to Kristi by Wednesday, April 13th at kpark@keystone.org or (970) 513-5848. If no comments are received, this document will become final on April 14th. If comments are received, they will be incorporated into a revised final document that will be made available as soon as possible after receipt of comments.

Items from the Meeting Agenda (each is discussed below)

1. Make-up of Subcommittee
2. Overview and Goals of Subcommittee
3. Proposed Subcommittee Process
4. Goals and Objectives for Energy and Minerals in the Resource Management Plan (RMP)
5. Alternatives

Make-up of Subcommittee

Regarding membership, the subcommittee observed that several key interests were missing from the table, and certain members agreed to contact representatives of those interests. For specific assignments, see Action Item #2 above.

Overview and Goals of Subcommittee

The subcommittee agreed with the following goals (which were listed in the meeting agenda):

- ♦ Develop goals and objectives for resource
- ♦ Develop alternatives for analysis, including where resource uses (and the subcommittees that deal with them) overlap
- ♦ Comment on how alternatives should be analyzed, if above and beyond BLM's process
- ♦ Comment on implementation issues that are critical to any alternatives (e.g., monitoring funds for any adaptive management options)
- ♦ Take periodic field trips to resource first-hand

Proposed Subcommittee Process

On the agenda for this meeting were three proposals regarding subcommittee procedures. These three proposals and the action the subcommittee took on them are:

- ♦ Subcommittees are not decision-makers. Subcommittees make recommendations to NWCOS, and NWCOS makes recommendations to BLM.
Action taken: The subcommittee agreed.
- ♦ Subcommittee membership will be open, but new members will be obligated to read past information and comply with NWCOS protocols.
Action taken: The subcommittee agreed.
- ♦ Subcommittees aim for consensus, though recommendations with at least 90% support will be carried to NWCOS along with the pros and cons of both the majority and minority positions.
Action taken: After some discussion, the subcommittee decided that setting a percentage minimum for agreement at this point in time was unnecessary. The subcommittee will aim for consensus and address the issue of what percentage agreement will be required on a case-by-case basis.

The subcommittee also agreed that minutes will reflect action items, decisions taken, and major themes of discussion, as well as particular areas of concerns or issues that arise.

It was suggested that it is often difficult to understand or remember what people said in a meeting based on minutes and memory alone, so the subcommittee decided that a tape recorder will be used at future meetings as a means of keeping a more accurate record. Jeff Comstock agreed to provide a recorder and make tapes available to interested NWCOS members.

Discussion of Goals and Objectives for Energy in the Resource Management Plan

BLM provided two working documents for discussion by the subcommittee, both of which are available on the NWCOS website at <http://www.nwcoss.org/79505/44432.html> or from Jeremy Casterson at jeremy_casterson@blm.gov or (970) 826-5071. These two documents are:

- “Resource Topics and Associated Planning Information,” in which BLM has summarized for each resource existing agency guidance, the objectives from the 1989 Resource Management Plan (RMP), the management opportunities identified in the Analysis of the Management Situation (AMS), and the pre-plan questions that BLM has identified and will address in the RMP. Jeremy Casterson of BLM discussed this document.
- “BLM Input on Goals and Objectives and Alternatives Shell,” in which BLM has written its draft overall goals and objectives for the new RMP and its draft goals and objectives for each resource in the Planning Area. Fred Conrath of BLM discussed this document. It was noted that several common themes to goals and objectives for all resources were

not listed for each resource and will be addressed in an overarching paragraph at the beginning of the RMP. These overarching items include all goals and objectives being subject to multiple use.

During the discussion of BLM's draft goals and objectives, several members of the subcommittee had questions or concerns about the way that some of the goals and objectives were articulated by BLM. The specific words or issues that the group mentioned and the page of the document "BLM Input on Goals and Objectives and Alternatives Shell" to which they refer are:

- "maximize the availability of federal oil and gas estate" (page 4)
- the role of "national policy" in energy development policy and its relationship to local needs (page 4)
- the meaning of "environmentally sound" energy exploration and development (page 4)
- the meaning of "economical" energy exploration and development (page 4)
- the absence of reference to the socioeconomic implications of energy exploration and development (page 4)
- the role of national security and domestic sources of energy in oil and gas policy (page 4)
- the absence of "maximizing" language with regard to renewable energy sources (page 7)

Although some participants were interested in wordsmithing these items at the meeting, others wanted to move on to the more "substantive" issues surrounding alternative formation. After much discussion, the group decided not to spend time on this at the meeting. Instead, it was decided that folks should generate their own suggestions about how BLM could word things differently, discuss them with one or more other participants from different sectors to iron out any major problems, and submit their recommendations to Fred Conrath at fred_conrath@blm.gov and copy Helen at hlittrell@keystone.org. Fred will try to incorporate any suggestions he receives into a second version of the goals and objectives for energy resources and, if he receives suggestions, he will provide an updated version to the subcommittee before the next meeting.

Discussion of Alternatives Affecting Energy in the Resource Management Plan

(Facilitator's Note: The RMP that BLM is currently preparing for the Little Snake Resource Area is expected to guide management of the Resource Area for the next 15-20 years.)

Because BLM was unable to complete its "alternative shell" prior to this meeting, Jeremy Casterson shared a sample of the kind of alternative shell that BLM will be using to analyze the alternatives. He said that BLM isn't yet sure of how many shells it will use or what issues or areas they will address. There will definitely be one large shell for the whole resource area, with possible shells for areas like Vermilion Basin or Sand Wash or for issues like oil and gas. Jeremy's **sample** alternative shell is below. Please remember that this not an official BLM document or policy; it is just an example for demonstration purposes only!

[Facilitator's Note: "CWP" refers to the Citizens' Wilderness Proposal; "stips" refers to stipulations on leases; "NSO" refers to No Surface Occupancy; "OHV" refers to Off-Highway Vehicles; and "ACEC" refers to Area of Critical Environmental Concern.]

SAMPLE ALTERNATIVE SHELL

Resource	Alternative A (No Action)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D
Oil and Gas	Entire area is open to leasing with standard terms and conditions	Split CWP area in half, half is available with standard stips, half is closed	Split CWP area into 3 sections, one open, one closed, one NSO	Entire CWP area is closed to leasing
Travel Management	Area is Open to OHV travel	Split CWP area in half, half open to OHVs, half closed	Entire area is Limited to Designated routes	Entire area is Closed to OHVs
Wilderness Characteristics	No special management of wilderness values	The half that is closed is designated ACEC	The area is designated a Special Recreation Management Area	The area is protected, closed to leasing and OHVs, but no special designation

SAMPLE ALTERNATIVE SHELL

The group discussed the issue of resource trade-offs and how impacts of one resource decision on other resources are made. It was pointed out that the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires that BLM analyze the impacts of each decision in the RMP on each resource, and that, at a general level, this is the primary form for addressing resource overlap issues. Jeremy added that as BLM generates and analyzes alternatives, staff members will make decisions about what trade-offs will be made in each alternative and assess the impacts of those trade-offs on other resources. Jeremy emphasized that raw numbers from the alternative assessment only inform decision-making; they do not automatically determine policy.

It was agreed that it is important for the subcommittee to be informed about the impacts of multiple use on the various resources in the planning area. The subcommittee decided that it would be useful to have overlay maps of the area to allow for a greater understanding of the impacts of decisions on different resources. Several members of the group agreed to contribute whatever maps they have to this effort (see Action Item #5 above for specifics). Ann Oliver will work with Fred and Jeremy to help develop maps that will be the most helpful to NWCOS in tracking overlapping interests.

Vanessa Cameron of Julander Energy shared a series of ideas she generated for ways energy companies, BLM, and other groups can partner to enhance wildlife opportunities in the Resource Area. The rest of the group was encouraged to generate and share similar ideas—identifying what they like or don't like about the current RMP and providing specific ideas on what should be done in the next RMP. The Keystone Center will post Vanessa's ideas on the NWCOS website and notify NWCOS that it is there, encouraging folks to have a look at it and share their own constructive ideas with the appropriate BLM contact (whose names and contact information

will be provided). The Keystone Center will create a listserv for the subcommittee that members can use to share information and ideas. Members are encouraged to use this listserv as well as meetings as forums for bringing ideas to the attention of the subcommittee whenever they see fit. Please share your ideas with one or more participants from another interest or sector in order to work through any major causes of concern prior to sending your suggestions to Fred and Helen. This will make Fred's efforts to incorporate your ideas go more smoothly.

Next Meeting/Next Steps

Facilitator's Note: The subcommittee meeting scheduled for April 7 has been cancelled because BLM has not completed the alternative shell. This meeting has been rescheduled for April 20 from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., at BLM's office in Craig (455 Emerson Street). This meeting will focus on BLM's alternative shell for energy and minerals.

The subcommittee agreed to tend to several tasks before the next meeting. These are specified in the Action Items at the beginning of this meeting summary.